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ABSTRACT

This report provides a comprehensive summary of the most recent data available from the National Assessment of Title I on the implementation of the Title I program and the academic performance of children in high poverty schools. Seven sections focus on: (1) "Policy Context for Title I" (provisions of the current Title I law and new initiatives for at-risk children); (2) "Profile of Title I Participants and Resources" (who receives Title I services and funds, what the Title I dollar buys, and targeting of Title I funds); (3) "Progress in Student Performance in High-Poverty Schools" (student performance on state and national assessments); (4) "Implementation of Standards, Assessments, and Accountability Systems" (e.g., development of state content and performance standards and of state assessment systems, and the impact of standards-based reform on teacher practices and student performance); (5) "Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning" (e.g., comprehensive, research-based school reform, early childhood education, and extended learning time); (6) "Special Title I Services" (Title I services for students attending private schools, Migrant Education Program, and programs for students who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk of dropping out); and (7) "Progress and Challenges." (Contains 121 endnotes.) (SM)

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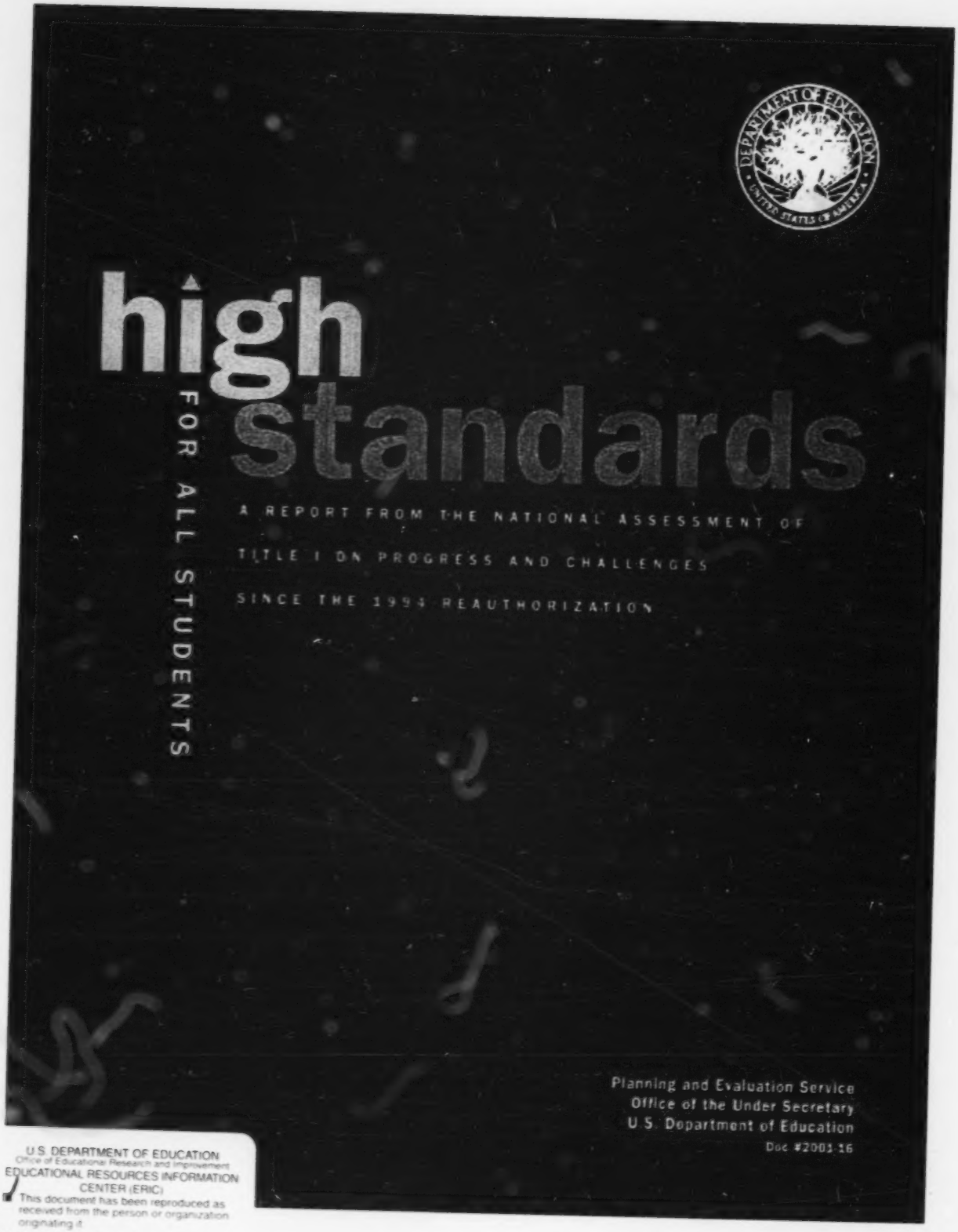
high standards
FOR ALL STUDENTS
A REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF
TITLE I ON PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES
SINCE THE 1994 REAUTHORIZATION
Planning and Evaluation Service
Office of the Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
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High Standards for All Students:
A Report from the National Assessment of Title I on Progress and Challenges Since the 1994 Reauthorization

Office of the Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Education

January 2001

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January 2001

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Introduction to the Report

This report provides a comprehensive summary of the most recent data available from the National Assessment of Title I on the implementation of the Title I program and the academic performance of children in high-poverty schools. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides federal assistance to eligible school districts and schools to help children meet challenging standards, with particular emphasis on children who are at risk of not meeting such standards. In addition to the main Title I program—Part A, the Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) program—Title I also includes other parts that provide services to children: Part B, the Even Start Family Literacy Program; Part C, the Migrant Education Program; and Part D Programs for Neglected and Delinquent Children and Youth.

The National Assessment of Title I was mandated by Congress as part of the 1994 reauthorization of ESEA to examine the progress of students whom the program was intended to benefit and the implementation of key provisions of the program. The final report of the National Assessment, *Promising Results, Continuing Challenges*, was released in 1999.[1] However, because additional findings have emerged since that time, this new report was prepared to provide a comprehensive and up-to-date summary of key evaluation findings about the Title I program.

The report is comprised of six sections. The first describes the policy context for Title I—the current provisions of the law and the major changes that were made in the 1994 reauthorization of the program, and the relationship of Title I to recent federal initiatives that support educational reform and improvement.

The second section provides a description of whom Title I serves, what the Title I dollar buys, and how Title I funds are distributed among districts and schools. The third and fourth sections address the frequently raised questions of the extent to which student achievement is improving and the extent to which Title I is fully implemented. The fifth section provides information on school-level strategies used to support student learning, and how these strategies are supported by Title I and other federal programs. The sixth section describes the provision of services to students attending private schools, migrant students served under Part C, and neglected and delinquent students served under Part D. The final section offers conclusions and implications.

This report is being issued at the same time as a report by the Independent Review Panel that has advised the U.S. Department of Education on the National Assessment of Title I since 1994. This panel, which was mandated under Sections 1501 and 14701 of ESEA, is composed of nationally-recognized researchers and policy experts, representatives of state and local education agencies and private schools, school-level staff, and parent representatives. The panel has defined issues for evaluating Title I and the federal impact on education reform; reviewed study plans, data analysis, and draft reports; and prepared its own recommendations for the future of Title I and the federal role in education.

I. Policy Context for Title I

Title I originated with the landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, which was enacted as part of the "War on Poverty." The primary purpose of the program has not changed since the time when it first became law—to ensure equal educational opportunity for all children regardless of socioeconomic background and to close the achievement gap between poor and affluent children, by providing additional resources for schools serving disadvantaged students. This purpose is illustrated by the current law's declaration of policy and statement of purpose (below):

> ***TITLE I—HELPING DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN MEET HIGH STANDARDS***
> "SEC. 1001. DECLARATION OF POLICY AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.
>
> "(a)(1) The Congress declares it to be the policy of the United States that a high-quality education for all individuals and a fair and equal opportunity to obtain that education are a societal good, are a moral imperative, and improve the life of every individual, because the quality of our lives ultimately depends on the quality of the lives of others."

To support this purpose, the program provides additional resources ($9.5 billion in FY 2001[2]) for schools to improve learning for students at risk of educational failure. This single program represents more than one-third (38 percent) of federal funds appropriated to support elementary and secondary education. The majority of Title I funds (91 percent) are distributed through the Title I Grants to LEAs (Part A) program.

Provisions of the Current Title I Law

The ESEA reauthorization in 1994 (which was called the Improving America's Schools Act, or IASA) made significant changes to the prior law, based on research findings reported in the 1993 national assessment of the program.[3] Previously the primary method of providing services to children was through "pull-out" programs in which students were removed from the regular classroom for remedial instruction. The progress of participating students was measured compared to other children who did not receive Title I services. Research found that the services that children received were not sufficient to close the achievement gap between children in high- and low-poverty schools. In addition, studies found that expectations were lower for students in high-poverty schools, and that attending high-poverty schools had a negative effect on student achievement, independent of the effect of the student's own family background.[4]

IASA, along with the Goals 2000 Educate America Act, introduced a new federal approach built around a framework of standards-driven reform and an emphasis on schoolwide reform. Under the new Title I law, states were required to develop challenging content and performance standards for all students that would be linked to an aligned assessment and accountability system. Students in schools receiving Title I funds would be held to the same standards as students in other schools; there would no longer be a dual accountability system. This approach was intended to promote both excellence and equity in education and to enable Title I and other federal programs to support state and local reform efforts. To accomplish this, the reauthorized Title I adopted a number of key principles outlined in the Title I legislation:

- Support states in setting high standards for <u>all</u> children—with the components of the education system aligned so that they are working in concert to help all students reach those standards;
- Focus on teaching and learning, through upgrading curriculum, accelerating instruction, and providing teachers with professional development to teach to high standards;

- Provide flexibility to stimulate school-based and district initiatives, coupled with greater accountability for student performance;

- Build partnerships among schools, families, and communities; and

- Target resources to where the needs are greatest.

IASA continues to allow school districts that receive Part A funds to distribute money to schools under two basic program models—targeted assistance and schoolwide programs. Targeted assistance schools provide instructional and support services to specific students who are at the greatest risk of not meeting states' performance standards. Under the schoolwide model, Title I funds are not targeted to specific students but may be used to improve the entire school. However, schools are required to ensure that students who need the most help actually benefit from the program. In order to qualify for a schoolwide program, 50 percent or more of a school's student body must come from low-income families; the 1994 reauthorization lowered this eligibility threshold from the previous level of 75 percent in order to allow more schools to use this more flexible approach.

The expansion of schoolwide programs was one of the most important ways in which the 1994 reauthorization increased flexibility in the use of Title I funds. In addition, Congress further expanded flexibility under the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999 (Ed-Flex), which allows states to waive many Title I requirements if states have a strong accountability system in place. In return for the increased flexibility, schools and districts are held accountable for the performance of all children. This flexibility with accountability is the heart of the Title I standards-based accountability system.

The 1994 amendments authorized ESEA through 1999, and the next reauthorization is pending. ESEA bills passed by the House and considered by the Senate during the 106th Congress both supported continuation of a standards-based system with strong accountability provisions.

New Initiatives for At-Risk Children

Since the ESEA reauthorization in 1994, several major new initiatives have been funded that support a similar student population as Title I. The five major initiatives are the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRD), the Reading Excellence Act (REA), Title I Accountability Grants, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and the Class Size Reduction Act.

The first two initiatives (CSRD and REA) are intended to support high-quality teaching and improved learning through intensive and focused professional development and a focused, research-based instructional program. The third (Title I Accountability Grants) provides support for additional instructional and professional development activities for low-performing schools.

- CSRD, which was funded through annual appropriations acts beginning in FY 1998, helps schools identify and adopt high-quality, well-defined, and research-based comprehensive school reform models that show the promise of preparing children to meet challenging state content and performance standards. FY 2001 funding for CSRD includes $210 million appropriated under Title I and an additional $50 million from the Fund for the Improvement of Education.

- REA was authorized in 1999 to provide support for improving children's reading achievement in high-poverty and low-performing schools. This K-3 program is targeted to high-poverty schools and schools that have been identified for improvement under the Title I law. REA requires that participating schools implement a research-based reading program and provide extensive professional development for all teachers in grades K-3. FY 2001 funding is $286 million.

- Title I Accountability Grants were included in the FY 2000 and FY 2001 appropriations bills in order to provide support for turning around low-performing schools. School districts are to use these funds to intervene in schools that have been identified as in need of improvement under Title I, while offering students in those schools the opportunity to transfer to better schools. The FY 2001 appropriations statute also requires that all school districts receiving Title I Part A funds must provide the opportunity for students in any school identified for improvement to transfer to a higher-performing school in the district that is not identified for improvement. FY 2001 funding is $225 million, up from $134 million in FY 2000.

The 21st Century and Class Size Reduction programs are based on research findings that additional learning time and smaller classes have a positive impact on the achievement of disadvantaged students.

- The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, authorized in 1994 and first funded in FY 1998, provides support for after-school programs that are focused on academic enrichment for at-risk children. The assumption is that low-achieving students need more instructional time and support in order to catch up. FY 2001 funding is $846 million.

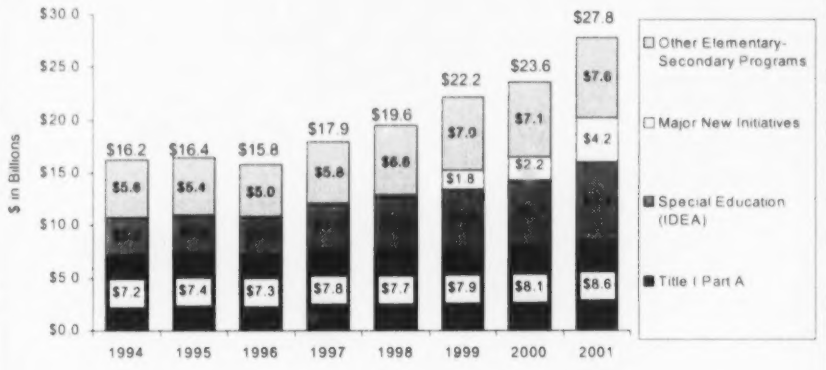
- The Class Size Reduction Act, funded through annual appropriations beginning in FY 1999, provides funds to districts to help schools reduce the number of students in their classrooms for the earlier grades. Smaller classes enable teachers to spend more time with individual children, thus reducing children's likelihood of failure. FY 2001 funding is $1.623 billion.

It is important to note that many high-poverty schools receive funds from multiple programs. Schools that use Title I funds for schoolwide programs are particularly encouraged to combine their federal, state and local funds to improve the entire school. Schools that make a concerted and thoughtful

effort to coordinate the use of funds are likely to increase the impact that these programs will have on improving the educational outcomes of low-performing students and low-performing schools.

These five programs and other new initiatives have received a growing share of federal funding for elementary and secondary education. Indeed, since 1994 increases in federal funding have gone primarily to new initiatives, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) special education program, and other elementary-secondary programs, rather than to Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies (Part A), which has long been the largest federal elementary-secondary education program. While total federal funding for elementary-secondary programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education increased by 72 percent from FY 1994 to FY 2001, after adjusting for inflation, funding for Title I Part A increased by only 21 percent. Federal funding for special education increased by 113 percent, and funding for other elementary-secondary programs increased by 36 percent.

Exhibit 1
Funding for Title I and Other Federal Elementary-Secondary Programs, FY 1994 to FY 2001
(Constant FY 2001 Dollars in Billions)



Notes: "Major New Initiatives" included in this exhibit are CSRD, REA, 21st Century Schools, Class Size Reduction, and School Renovation. Funds for Title I Accountability Grants are not included in "New Initiatives" because these are reserved from the Title I Part A appropriation.

Exhibit reads: Funding for Title I Part A, expressed in constant FY 2001 dollars, rose from $7.2 billion in FY 1994 to $8.6 billion in FY 2001 (a 21 percent increase), while total funding for elementary secondary education programs rose from $16.2 billion to $27.8 billion (an 72 percent increase).
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Budget Service.

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II. Profile of Title I Participants and Resources

Who Receives Title I Services

Title I reaches more than 12.5 million students enrolled in both public and private schools. Minority students participate at rates higher than their proportion of the student population. In 1997-98, 29 percent of Title I participants were African-American, 29 percent were Hispanic, 3 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander, 2 percent were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 35 percent were white non-Hispanic, and 1 percent were from other ethnic/racial groups.[1] Title I services are provided to more than 2 million students with limited English proficiency, 1.2 million students with disabilities, and more than 100,000 children identified as homeless.[5]

Title I funds may be used for children from preschool age to high school, but districts and schools often choose to focus these funds on students in the early grades. Two-thirds (67 percent) of Title I participants are in grades 1-6, while 12 percent are in kindergarten or preschool, 15 percent are in grades 7-9, and 5 percent are in grades 10-12.[6]

It is important to recognize that the concept of a "Title I participant" is different in targeted assistance schools and schoolwide programs. In targeted assistance schools, participants are students who receive specific services supported with Title I funds, while in schoolwide programs, all students are counted as Title I participants since the funds are used to improve the school as a whole.

Title I also provides supplemental assistance to children who face specific educational barriers, including children who come from families with low literacy, the children of migrant agricultural workers, and children who are neglected or delinquent:

- Even Start (Part B) supports family literacy programs that are intended to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy in low-income families. The children of parents with poor literacy skills are less likely to receive early literacy training at home or to be enrolled in a preschool program—situations that increase the risk of school failure. Even Start programs served 40,500 children and 30,800 adults in 1998-99.[7] FY 2001 funding for Even Start is $250 million.

- The Migrant Education Program (Part C) supports supplemental education and support services for children of migrant farmworkers and fishers. Migrant children have families who move frequently to pursue agricultural work, and thus must change schools frequently—circumstances that have a detrimental effect on their achievement. The Migrant Education Program served 621,000 migrant children in 1997-98.[8] In addition, about 300,000 migrant children also were served under the Title I Part A program. FY 2001 funding for the Migrant Education Program is $380 million.

- Part D of Title I authorizes state and local agency programs for students who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk of dropping out. Neglected or delinquent students are extremely educationally disadvantaged; most are incarcerated in state juvenile and adult correctional facilities and have had numerous disruptions in their education. State agency programs served 205,000 neglected and delinquent children in 1997-98, while local agency programs served an additional 85,000 students in local correctional facilities.[9] FY 2001 funding for state "N or D" programs is $46 million; funding for local N or D programs is provided through Part A funds and is estimated at $59 million for FY 2001.

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[1] Overall elementary-secondary enrollments by race/ethnicity for the same year were: 17 percent African-American, 14 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 1 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 64 percent white non-Hispanic. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2000), *Digest of Education Statistics: 1999*, Washington, DC, Table 45.

Who Receives Title I Funds

Title I is intended to help address the greater educational challenges facing high-poverty communities by targeting extra resources to school districts and schools with the highest concentrations of poverty, where academic performance tends to be low and the obstacles to raising performance are the greatest. Ninety-six percent of the nation's highest-poverty schools (those with 75 percent or more students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch) participate in Title I.[10] While the highest-poverty schools comprise 16 percent of all schools, they account for 46 percent of Title I spending. About three-fourths (73 percent) of Title I funds go to schools with 50 percent or more students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.[11] However, the program also serves schools with low poverty levels (defined in this report as those where fewer than 35 percent of the students are eligible for subsidized lunches).

Exhibit 2
Proportion of Schools Receiving Title I Funds and the Distribution of All Schools, Title I Schools, and Title I Funds, by School Poverty Level, 1997-98

School Poverty Level	Proportion of Schools Receiving Title I Funds	Percentage Distribution of All Schools	Percentage Distribution of Title I Schools	Percentage Distribution of Title I Funds
75-100% Poverty	96%	16%	35%	46%
50-74% Poverty	80%	17%	31%	27%
35-49% Poverty	49%	13%	13%	9%
0-34% Poverty	28%	54%	21%	18%
All Schools	57%			

Exhibit reads: Nearly all (96 percent) of the highest-poverty schools receive Title I funds, and these schools account for 35 percent of all Title I schools and 46 percent of Title I funds.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report* (2000).

Title I funds are predominantly used at the elementary level. Overall, secondary schools received 15 percent of Title I funds, about half as much as their share of the nation's low-income students (33 percent). Secondary schools are less likely to receive Title I funds (29 percent, compared with 67 percent of elementary schools), and those secondary schools that do receive Title I funds tended to receive smaller allocations than elementary schools ($372 vs. $495 per low-income student, respectively, in 1997-98). However, the highest-poverty secondary schools received allocations that were comparable in size to those in the highest-poverty elementary schools ($446 vs. $479).[12] Moreover, changes made in the 1994 reauthorization resulted in a dramatic increase in the proportion of the highest-poverty secondary schools that receive Title I funds, from 61 percent in 1993-94 to 93 percent in 1997-98—about the same proportion as for the highest-poverty elementary schools (95 percent).[13]

What the Title I Dollar Buys

Most Title I funds are used for instruction, supporting the hiring of additional teachers and instructional aides, providing instructional materials and computers, and supporting other instructional services and resources. In the 1997-98 school year, three-fourths (77 percent) of Title I funds were spent on instruction, 12 percent were used for instructional support, and another 12 percent were used for program administration and indirect costs. Title I spending on instruction amounted to an estimated $5.5 billion in 1997-98, including $3.3 billion spent on teachers (47 percent of total Title I expenditures) and $1.0 billion on instructional aides (15 percent).[14]

Exhibit 3
Use of Title I Funds for Instruction, Instructional Support, and Program Administration, 1997-98

	Total Expenditures ($ in millions)	Share of Total Expenditures
Instruction	**$5,473**	**77%**
Teachers	$3,342	47%
Teacher Aides	$1,043	15%
Instructional Materials	$468	7%
Technology for Instruction	$287	4%
Districtwide Instructional Programs	$256	4%
Services for Private School Students	$77	1%
Instructional Support	**$822**	**12%**
Professional Development	$212	3%
Parent Involvement	$158	2%
Guidance Counselors, Psychologists, Social Workers	$155	2%
Other Instructional Support	$297	4%
Program Administration	**$835**	**12%**
District Administration	$594	8%
School Administration	$241	3%

Notes: Totals do not add due to rounding. "Districtwide instructional programs" include districtwide preschool, full-day kindergarten, extended-time programs, and other targeted services for at-risk students. "Other instructional support" includes student health services, library/media specialists, and other instructional support staff. "Program administration" includes funds allocated for indirect costs.

Exhibit reads: Title I spending on instruction amounted to $5.473 billion in the 1997-98 school year—77 percent of total Title I funds.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report* (2000).

The share of Title I funds used for instruction (77 percent) was greater than the share of total school district expenditures used for this purpose (62 percent). Similarly, the share of funds used for instructional support under Title I (12 percent) was slightly greater than for total district expenditures (9 percent). The share of funds used for administration appears about the same for Title I (12 percent) and district expenditures overall (11 percent).[15] The remaining district expenditures (18 percent) were used for building operation and maintenance, transportation, and food services. Nearly all Title I funds are used at the district and school levels; states distributed 99 percent of their Title I funds to school districts and retained only 1 percent for administration, leadership, and technical assistance to districts and schools.[16]

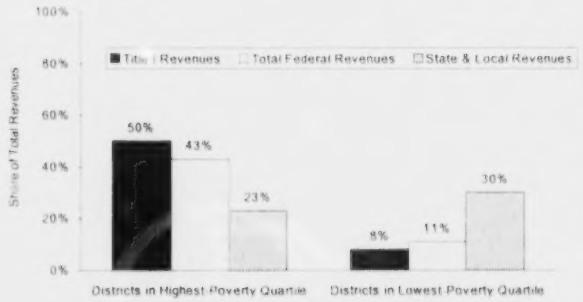
Title I funds may help equalize resources for high- and low-poverty schools by providing additional support in districts and schools with greater needs, which often receive fewer resources from state and local sources. For example, Title I funds purchased an average of 4.5 computers in the highest-poverty elementary schools in 1997-98 (33 percent of the new computers), compared with 0.5 computers in low-poverty elementary schools. High-poverty schools' use of Title I funds for technology helped to compensate for the fact that they received fewer computers from state and local funds (5.3 computers, versus 7.1 in low-poverty schools).[17]

Although Title I accounts for a relatively small percentage of total funding for elementary and secondary education (less than 3 percent), the program plays a significant role in supporting local education improvement efforts. It provides flexible funding that may be used for supplementary instruction, professional development, new computers, after-school programs, and other strategies for raising student achievement. For example, Title I funds used for technology amounted to about $287 million in 1997-98, more than the combined appropriations for the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund and Technology Innovation Challenge Grants for that year ($257 million). Similarly, Title I funds used for professional development amounted to $212 million in 1997-98, nearly as much as the funding for the Eisenhower Professional Development Program (elementary-secondary programs) for that year ($244 million).[18]

The Targeting of Title I Funds

Title I funds are much more targeted to the highest-poverty districts than are state and local funds, and are also more targeted than are federal education funds overall. Districts in the highest-poverty quartile received 50 percent of all Title I funds in FY 1997, more than double their share of state and local funds (23 percent) and also greater than their share of federal education funds overall (43 percent). The poorest districts' share of Title I funds (50 percent) is about the same as their share of the nation's poor children (49 percent), while their share of state and local funds (23 percent) is less than their share of total school-age children (25 percent). In contrast, districts in the lowest-poverty quartile received 8 percent of Title I funds and 11 percent of all federal funds but 30 percent of state and local funds.

Exhibit 4
Distribution of Title I, Federal, and State and Local Revenues, in Highest- and Lowest-Poverty Districts



Highest-poverty quartile of districts contains 25% of the nation s students and 49% of the poor students
Lowest-poverty quartile of districts contains 25% of the nation s students and 7% of the poor students

Exhibit reads: The highest-poverty districts received 50 percent of Title I funds and 43 percent of total federal funds but only 23 percent of state and local funds.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report* (2000).

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Although Title I and other federal programs provide more funds in high-poverty districts, these districts still have less funding per pupil than do low-poverty districts. The highest-poverty districts received four times as much federal funding per pupil ($692) as did the lowest-poverty districts ($172), but even so the highest-poverty districts still received 10 percent less in total funding per pupil ($6,248, compared with $6,967 in the lowest-poverty districts).

Despite the fact that Title I targets high-poverty areas more strongly than other funds, historically there have been concerns that Title I funds are still spread too thinly, undermining the program's capacity to meet the high expectations set by policymakers. **The 1994 reauthorization changed the Title I allocation provisions in an effort to improve the targeting of Title I funds on the neediest districts and schools, but these changes had little impact on the targeting of Title I funds at the district level.** The share of Title I funds allocated to the highest-poverty quartile of districts remained virtually unchanged, rising slightly from 49 percent in FY 1994 to 50 percent in FY 1997. Most Title I funds continue to flow through the Basic Grants formula (84 percent of total funding), which goes to nearly all districts. Funding for the more targeted Concentration Grant formula did increase substantially, but this formula still has little impact because it accounts for only 16 percent of the funds. A new Targeted Grants formula created under the 1994 reauthorization would direct a greater share of the funds to the highest-poverty districts, but this formula has not been funded. In addition, a shift to using updated poverty data and making allocations directly to school districts also had very little impact on school district allocations, due to the introduction of special hold-harmless provisions.[18]

However, the changes in the law did result in substantial increases in Title I targeting at the school level. Almost all (95 percent) of the highest-poverty schools received Title I funds in 1997-98, up from 79 percent in 1993-94 (Exhibit 5). Funding for low-poverty schools declined from 49 percent to 36 percent over the same period. At the secondary level, nearly all (93 percent) of the highest-poverty secondary schools received Title I funds in 1997-98, up from 61 percent in 1993-94.[19]

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[18] Under the 1994 reauthorization, Congress required the U.S. Department of Education to allocate Title I funds using updated poverty estimates prepared by the Census Bureau, beginning in FY 1997. The purpose of this new requirement was to address longstanding concerns about the fairness and accuracy of allocations that had been based on the decennial census, which became increasingly out-of-date as the decade progressed. Congress also required that allocations be made directly to school districts beginning in FY 1999 using Census Bureau poverty estimates, a change from the previous practice of making federal allocations to the county level, with state suballocations to school districts within each county. If allowed to take effect, each of these changes would cause significant shifts in the distribution of Title I funds across districts. However, special provisions have been included in each appropriations bill from FY 1997 through FY 2001 that have largely prevented the new poverty data and allocations process from affecting school district allocations.

Exhibit 5
Change in Proportion of Highest-Poverty and Low-Poverty Schools that Receive Title I Funds, 1993-94 to 1997-98

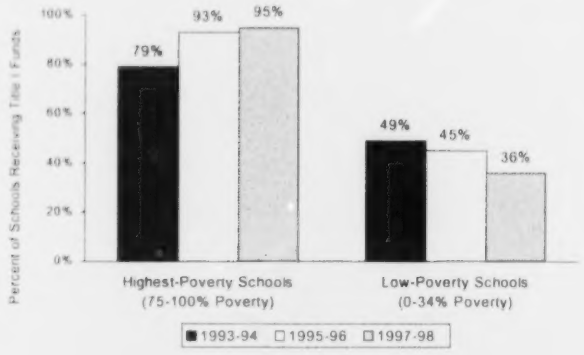

Exhibit reads: The proportion of the highest-poverty schools that received Title I funds rose from 79 percent in 1993-94 to 95 percent in 1997-98, while the proportion of low-poverty schools receiving these funds declined.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Targeting Schools: Study of Title I Allocations Within School Districts* (1999).

Improved targeting has increased the number of high-poverty schools served but has not necessarily increased the intensity of services. In a sample of 17 large urban districts, the average size of school allocations remained unchanged from 1994-95 to 1996-97, indicating that the growth in total funding and redirection of some funds away from low-poverty schools have increased the number of high-poverty schools served rather than increasing the intensity of services in those schools.[20]

Moreover, although low-poverty schools were less likely to receive Title I funds, those low-poverty schools that did receive funding tended to receive substantially larger per-pupil allocations than high-poverty Title I schools. Low-poverty Title I schools received $771 per low-income student, compared with only $475 in the highest-poverty Title I schools.[21] This occurs because the Title I formula allocates funds to nearly all districts, including low-poverty districts that can concentrate their Title I resources on the schools that have the highest poverty rates in their district, although these schools would not be considered "high-poverty" in other, poorer districts. At the same time, high-poverty districts may have many high-poverty schools among which to spread their Title I funds, resulting in smaller allocations in these schools.

Title I resources are intended to "supplement, not supplant" a comparable base of state and local resources that would be provided in each school in the absence of Title I funds.[iii] **Data from the *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding* portray a mixed picture of resource comparability in**

[iii] The Title I statute requires that districts provide comparable levels of state and local resources to their Title I schools as to their non-Title I schools. The comparability requirement applies only within districts, not between districts; that is, it does not address any disparities in funding that may exist across districts within a state or across states. This report takes a broader view of the comparability issue, examining the comparability of non-Title I resources across high- and low-poverty schools nationally.

high- and low-poverty schools. Before Title I funds were added, spending on school personnel was 7 percent lower in the highest-poverty elementary schools than in low-poverty schools. The highest-poverty schools had smaller average class sizes than low-poverty schools, but teachers in the highest-poverty schools earned lower salaries, had fewer years of experience, and were less likely to hold an advanced degree. On average, teacher salaries were 14 percent lower in the highest-poverty schools than in low-poverty schools.[22] Other data indicate that teachers in the highest-poverty schools are more likely to be new teachers with relatively little teaching experience, and at the secondary level they are less likely to have full certification in the field of their teaching assignment.[23]

Exhibit 6
Comparability of Staffing in the Highest-Poverty and Low-Poverty Elementary Schools, 1997-98

	Highest-Poverty Schools (Poverty >=75%)	Low-Poverty Schools (Poverty <35%)
Spending on School Personnel	$3,496	$3,840
Average Class Size*	20.6	23.0
Average Teacher Salary	$35,821	$40,803
Average Years Teaching Experience	13.2 years	15.5 years
Percentage of Teachers with Masters Degree or Higher	37%	49%

* Average class size data include special education teachers and students

Exhibit reads: The highest-poverty schools had smaller average class sizes than low-poverty schools; however, teachers in the highest-poverty schools received lower average salaries.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report* (2000).

Title I funds largely serve to close the funding gap between Title I and non-Title I schools, rather than providing a higher level of resources to meet the greater challenges associated with larger concentrations of disadvantaged students. Before Title I funds were added, Title I elementary schools spent $196 less per pupil on school personnel than did non-Title I schools: the additional $273 per pupil added through Title I funds raised the spending in the Title I schools to $77 more than in the non-Title I schools. Thus, of the total amount of Title I funds spent on school personnel, 72 percent contributed to closing the funding gap between Title I and non-Title I schools, and only 28 percent resulted in a higher level of funding in Title I schools. In the highest-poverty elementary schools, however, the funding gap was not closed: spending on school staff remained lower than in low-poverty schools, even after Title I funds were added.[24]

III. Progress in Student Performance in High-Poverty Schools

The impact of the Title I program on student achievement cannot be easily disentangled from the impact of the state and local reform efforts that the program is designed to support. Title I's predecessor, the Chapter 1 program, was built around a framework of supplementary services for targeted students that could be evaluated by comparing Chapter 1 participants to a control group of non-participants. In contrast, Title I, as reauthorized in 1994, was designed to work systemically and in tandem with state and local efforts to improve the overall quality of instruction. Nearly two-thirds of Title I funds are now used for schoolwide programs rather than being restricted to services for targeted students. The great extent to which there is intermingling of Title I resources with state and local resources, combined with the new focus on supporting state and local standards-based reform, make it impossible to measure the unique and separate impact of Title I dollars on student achievement, particularly in schoolwide programs.

However, we can examine overall trends in student achievement—particularly for students in the highest-poverty schools and for low-performing students, those whom Title I is primarily intended to benefit—in order to examine the combined impact of state and local reforms, Title I support, and other school improvement efforts on student performance. The highest-poverty schools are defined as those where 75 percent or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. Low-performing students are defined as those scoring at the 25th percentile or the 10th percentile of student achievement.

This report examines trends in student performance using both state assessment data and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Neither of these measures alone can provide a definitive answer to questions about the impact of standards-based reform on student achievement.

Student achievement on state assessments represents the primary criterion that the Title I legislation applies to measure school success, but these data cannot be simply aggregated across states to examine national trends or used to make comparisons among states. State assessments are intended to provide information on student progress toward meeting state content and performance standards. However, because each state has developed its own standards and assessments, there is little comparability across states in the content and rigor of these standards and assessments. In addition, because state assessments were not required to be in place until the 2000-01 school year, most states do not yet have the trend data needed to assess student progress.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress provides a high-quality assessment that is consistent across states, making the data useful for examining national trends in student achievement. However, the NAEP is not aligned with individual state content and performance standards, so it does not necessarily measure what students are expected to learn in their states.

NAEP was revised in the early 1990s, with the result that there are now two NAEP assessments: the Main NAEP and the Trend NAEP. The Main NAEP was created to provide an assessment that is more consistent with current content focuses and testing approaches (such as a reduced emphasis on multiple choice items and a greater emphasis on open-ended and extended response items); Main NAEP data are available beginning in 1990 for mathematics and 1992 for reading. The Trend NAEP continues the previous NAEP assessment in order to track long-term trends since the early 1970s; Trend NAEP data disaggregated by school poverty level is available from 1988 to the present (because NAEP did not collect school poverty information prior to 1988). This report examines short-term trends on the Main NAEP as well as longer-term trends on the Trend NAEP.

One of the features of the Main NAEP is that it defines "Basic," "Proficient," and "Advanced" levels of achievement. In this regard, the Main NAEP is consistent with the new state assessments which also establish various proficiency levels (as required under Title I law). **However, specific proficiency levels are defined differently across states and are also inconsistent between NAEP and state assessments, and there is disagreement over what level of student performance should be considered "basic" or "proficient."** Indeed, the percentage of students scoring at the "proficient" level on state assessments varies widely across states—differences which do not necessarily reflect actual differences in student achievement. Comparing the percentage of students achieving at or above the "proficient" level on state assessments and NAEP shows that the variation across states is much greater for state assessments than it is for NAEP. For example, in Tennessee the percentage of students at or above the proficient level in reading in 1998 is about the same on both the state assessment and NAEP (26 percent and 25 percent, respectively), while in Texas the percentage is almost three times higher on the state assessment than on the NAEP (89 percent vs. 29 percent).

Exhibit 7
Percentage of 4th-Grade Students Achieving At or Above the "Proficient" Level in Reading on NAEP and on State Assessments, 1998

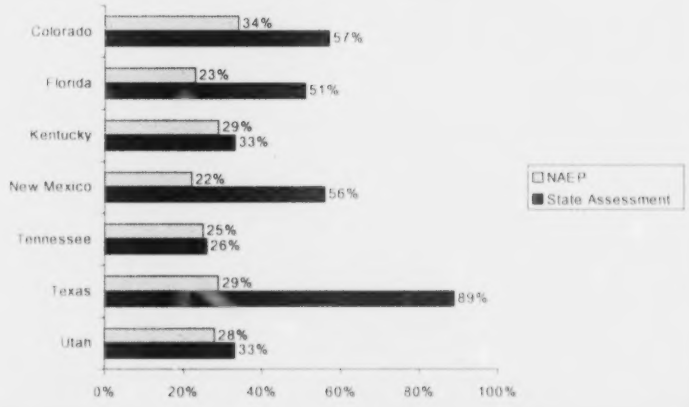

Exhibit reads: In Colorado, the percentage of fourth-grade students who scored at or above the "proficient" level on the state reading assessment in 1997-98 (34 percent) was lower than the percent scoring at the proficient level on the Main NAEP reading assessment.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *National Assessment of Educational Progress, Main NAEP Reading* (1998); Council of Chief State School Officers and U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *State Education Indicators with a Focus on Title I: 2000* (draft).

Student Performance on State Assessments

Three-year trends reported by nine states show progress in the percentage of students in the highest-poverty schools meeting state standards for proficiency in reading and mathematics. Because states have been changing their assessment systems to comply with the requirements in the 1994 reauthorization, only nine states can currently provide three-year trend data on students in high-poverty schools. In reading, the proportion of elementary school students (primarily fourth-graders) in the highest-poverty schools who performed at or above the state's proficient level increased in seven of the nine states (Exhibit 8). In mathematics, achievement improved for middle school students (primarily eighth-graders) in seven of the nine states as well. In six states, students in the highest-poverty schools made progress in both subjects.[25]

Exhibit 8
Trends in Student Achievement on State Assessments in Nine States:
Proportion of Students in the Highest-Poverty Schools Performing At or Above State Proficient Levels

State	Reading (Grade 3 or 4) **			Mathematics (Grade 6, 7 or 8) **		
	1996-97*	1998-99*	Change	1996-97*	1998-99*	Change
Alabama*	58	72	+14	64	63	-1
Connecticut	13	20	+7	11	25	+14
Kansas	39	37	-2	12	22	+10
Kentucky*	27	24	-3	20	19	-1
Maryland	10	16	+6	8	10	+2
Michigan	35	38	+3	29	31	+2
North Carolina	49	54	+5	46	63	+17
Ohio*	19	38	+19	12	14	+2
Texas	68	81	+13	57	79	+22
TOTAL			**7 INCREASED** **2 DECREASED**			**7 INCREASED** **2 DECREASED**

* Three-year trends are reported for the most recent period available—either the 1996-97 through 1998-99 school years (CT, KS, MD, MI, NC, and TX) or the 1995-96 through 1997-98 school years (AL, KY, and OH).
** At the elementary level, two states reported achievement data for grade 3 (KS and MS) and the remaining states reported data for grade 4; at the middle-school level, one state reported data for grade 6 (OH), two states reported data for grade 7 (KS and MI), and the remaining states reported data for grade 8.

Exhibit reads: In Connecticut, the percentage of fourth-grade students in high-poverty schools who scored at or above the proficient level on the state reading assessment rose by 7 percentage points over the most recent three-year period available, from 13 percent in 1996-97 to 20 percent in 1998-99.
Source: Council of Chief State School Officers and U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *State Education Indicators with a Focus on Title I: 2000* (draft).

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In some of these states the gains appear substantial. In reading, the proportion of students in the highest-poverty schools who performed at or above the proficient level increased by 6 to 19 percentage points in five of the nine states. In mathematics, four states show the proportion of these students who were at or above the proficient level increasing by 10 to 22 percentage points over the two-year period.

State assessment results also indicate some progress in narrowing the achievement gap between high- and low-poverty schools. In reading, the achievement gap for elementary students declined by 1 to 10 percentage points in six of the nine states (Exhibit 9). In mathematics, the achievement gap for middle school students declined by 2 to 11 percentage points in six of the states. Declines in the achievement gap between high- and low-poverty schools tended to be smaller than the achievement gains for high-poverty schools, because low-poverty schools also tended to show achievement gains.

Exhibit 9
Change in the Achievement Gap:
Difference Between the Highest-Poverty and Low-Poverty Schools in the Proportion of Students Who Performed At or Above Proficient Levels on State Assessments in Nine States

State	Gap in Reading (Grade 3 or 4) **			Gap in Mathematics (Grade 6, 7 or 8) **		
	1996-97*	1998-99*	Change	1996-97*	1998-99*	Change
Alabama*	26	20	-6	23	24	+1
Connecticut	52	46	-6	50	41	-9
Kansas	28	38	+10	37	32	-5
Kentucky*	13	19	+6	15	22	+7
Maryland	40	36	-4	55	51	-4
Michigan	21	30	+9	28	40	+12
North Carolina	28	27	-1	31	20	-11
Ohio*	36	26	-10	42	40	-2
Texas	20	15	-5	24	14	-10
TOTAL			**6 DECREASED** **3 INCREASED**			**6 DECREASED** **3 INCREASED**

* Three-year trends are reported for the most recent period available—either the 1996-97 through 1998-99 school years (CT, KS, MD, MI, NC, and TX) or the 1995-96 through 1997-98 school years (AL, KY, and OH).
** At the elementary level, two states reported achievement data for grade 3 (KS and MS) and the remaining states reported data for grade 4; at the middle-school level, one state reported data for grade 6 (OH), two states reported data for grade 7 (KS and MI), and the remaining states reported data for grade 8.

Exhibit reads: In Connecticut, the achievement gap between the highest-poverty schools and low-poverty schools—as measured by the percentage of fourth-grade students who scored at or above the proficient level on the state reading assessment—narrowed by 6 percentage points over the most recent three-year period available, from a 52-point gap in 1996-97 to a 46-point gap in 1998-99.
Source: Council of Chief State School Officers and U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *State Education Indicators with a Focus on Title I: 2000* (draft).

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Student Performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress

In contrast to the recent state assessment data, longer-term trends in NAEP scores depict a widening achievement gap between high- and low-poverty schools from the late 1980s to 1999. In reading, 9-year-olds' average scores on the Trend NAEP declined slightly (by 4 points) in the highest-poverty schools, while those in low-poverty schools increased steadily (a 9-point gain) (Exhibit 10). In mathematics, the average score for 9-year-olds increased slightly (by 4 points) in the highest-poverty schools, but increased more (13 points) in low-poverty schools (Exhibit 11). Overall, the reading achievement gap between the highest-poverty and low-poverty schools increased from a 27-point gap in 1988 to a 40-point gap in 1999. Similarly, the mathematics achievement gap increased from a 20-point gap in 1986 to a 29-point gap in 1999.

However, Trend NAEP scores for the highest-poverty schools have risen since 1992 in both reading and mathematics. Reading scores for 9-year-olds rose by 6 points from 1992 to 1999, after having declined by 10 points from 1988 to 1992. In math, scores for 9-year-olds rose by 4 points from 1992 to 1999. The achievement gap between the highest-poverty and low-poverty schools held steady during this period in both subjects.

The achievement gap between high- and low-poverty schools is substantial, equal to several grade levels. A 10-point difference in NAEP scale scores can be considered roughly equivalent to one grade level.[iv] Therefore, the 40-point gap in average reading scores between 9-year-olds in the highest-poverty and low-poverty schools could be considered approximately equal to a difference of four grade levels in student performance. Similarly, the 29-point gap in average math scores between 9-year-olds in the highest-poverty and low-poverty schools could be considered approximately equal to a difference of three grade levels in student performance.

Among the lowest-achieving students, NAEP reading performance as measured by the Main NAEP shows no significant change during the 1990s. Among fourth-graders, students scoring at the 25th percentile had the same average score in 1998 as in 1992. The average score for students at the 25th percentile increased by 4 points for eighth-graders and declined by 2 points for 12th-graders. Across all three grade levels, scores declined between 1992 and 1994 and then rose from 1994 to 1998 (Exhibit 12).

However, math results for low-achieving students show substantial gains in average scores from 1990 to 1996. Among fourth-graders, NAEP scores for students at the 25th percentile rose by 10 points, from 192 in 1990 to 202 in 1996. Among older students, scores for students at the 25th percentile rose by 10 points for eighth-graders and by 12 points for 12th-graders (Exhibit 13).

The reasons for the divergent patterns in student performance as measured by state assessments and the two NAEP assessments are unclear. The state and NAEP tests measure different time periods, cover a small number of states in the case of the state assessments, and reflect different expectations about specific content knowledge and performance levels. Further research is needed to determine the most appropriate ways to measure national trends in student performance for an educational system based on decentralized and diverse standards governing what students in America are expected to know and be able to do.

[iv] This is a rough metric, based on the observed differences in average NAEP scores between the grade levels tested. Average scores for eighth-grade students were about 46 to 48 points higher than the averages for fourth-grade students, based on the most recent Main NAEP assessments in reading and mathematics. Average scores for 12th-grade students were 28 to 33 points higher than the average for eighth-grade students. Similar patterns can be seen on the Trend NAEP by comparing 13-year-olds to 9-year-olds and 17-year-olds to 13-year-olds.

Exhibit 10
Reading Performance on the Trend NAEP, by School Poverty Level, 1988 to 1999:
Average Scale Scores of 9-Year-Old Public School Students

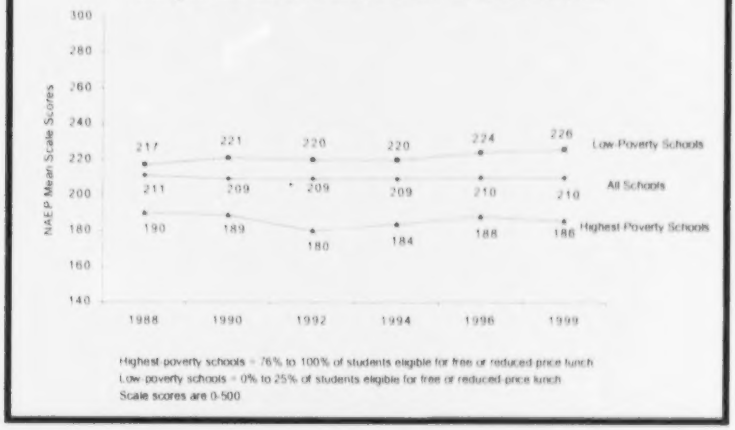

Exhibit reads: The average NAEP reading score for 9-year-old students in the highest-poverty schools declined from 190 in 1988 to 186 in 1999.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Trend NAEP Reading, unpublished tabulations, 2000.

Exhibit 11
Mathematics Performance on the Trend NAEP, by School Poverty Level, 1986 to 1999:
Average Scale Scores of 9-Year-Old Public School Students

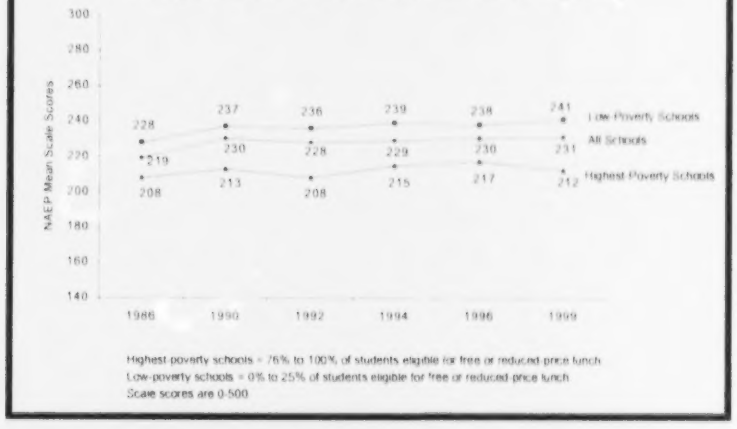

Exhibit reads: The average NAEP math score for 9-year-old students in the highest-poverty schools rose from 208 in 1986 to 212 in 1999.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Trend NAEP Mathematics, unpublished tabulations, 2000.

Exhibit 12
Reading Performance on the Main NAEP for Low-Achieving Students, 1992 to 1998:
Average Scale Scores of Public School Students at the 25th Percentile

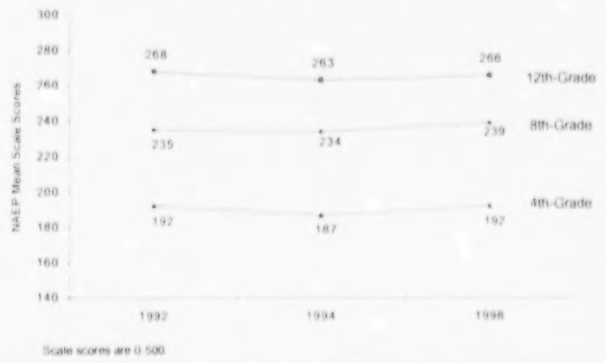

Exhibit reads: The average NAEP reading score of fourth graders performing at the lowest 25th percentile was 192 in 1998, the same as in 1992 but higher than in 1994.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Main NAEP Reading, unpublished tabulations, 2000.

Exhibit 13
Mathematics Performance on the Main NAEP for Low-Achieving Students, 1990 to 1996:
Average Scale Scores of Public School Students at the 25th Percentile

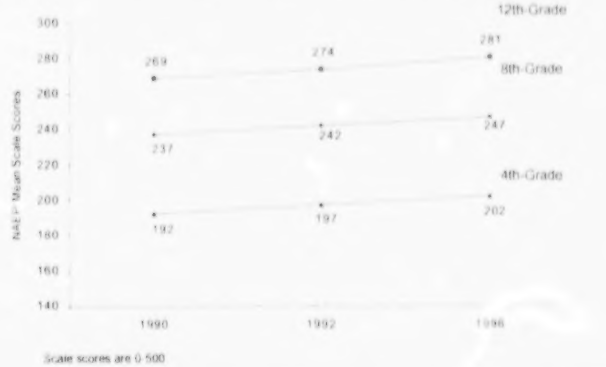

Exhibit reads: The average NAEP math score of fourth graders performing at the lowest 25th percentile was 202 in 1996, a 10-point increase over 1990.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Main NAEP Mathematics, unpublished tabulations, 2000.

IV. Implementation of Standards, Assessments, and Accountability Systems

A central feature of Title I, as revised in the 1994 reauthorization, is its emphasis on promoting high expectations for all students, schools, and districts. To support this goal, the Title I law requires states to develop or adopt challenging content and performance standards, assessments that are aligned with the state standards, and accountability systems to ensure that schools and districts are enabling their students to meet the state standards.

These Title I provisions were intended to support the standards-based reforms already being implemented in many states and localities and to extend high educational expectations to students served by Title I. states, districts, and schools were called on to break with past practice by replacing minimum standards for some children with challenging standards for all. Rather than a separate Title I system of standards and assessments, the standards and assessments used for Title I are to be the same as those developed by the State and local districts for all children. Indeed, the Title I program's support for establishing systems of standards and assessments is intended, in the words of the statute, "to enable schools to provide opportunities for children served to acquire the knowledge and skills contained in the challenging state content standards and to meet the challenging state performance standards developed for all children."

In addition, Title I required that states implement accountability systems for measuring district and school performance, identifying those in need of improvement, and assisting and intervening as necessary to turn around low-performing schools and districts.

Development of State Content and Performance Standards

By the 1997-98 school year, each state was to have adopted challenging content standards in reading and math that specify what all children are expected to know and be able to do, and challenging performance standards for students' mastery of the content standards. Performance standards are to include at least three levels of attainment—two high performance levels (proficient and advanced), as well as a partially-proficient level—that can be used to determine how well children are learning the material in the state content standards.

Nearly all states now have content standards in place, but progress has been considerably slower in developing performance standards. As of January 2001, 51 states (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico[v]) had met the requirement for developing content standards in the core subjects of reading and math (Exhibit 14). The remaining state (Iowa) has submitted evidence of its content standards, which is currently being reviewed.

In contrast, only 28 states had approved performance standards by January 2001 (Exhibit 14). The remaining states' performance standards are being reviewed as part of the U.S. Department of Education's review of state assessment systems. The development of performance standards is so closely related to the development of final assessments that many states have not met the timeline set forth in the statute.

External peer reviewers recommend approval of a state's performance standards based on the degree of broad-based involvement in their development, whether or not the performance standards are approved at the state level, and whether the process used to develop the standards leads to challenging and rigorous standards for all students.

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[v] Sec. 14101(27) of ESEA defines the term "state" to include the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

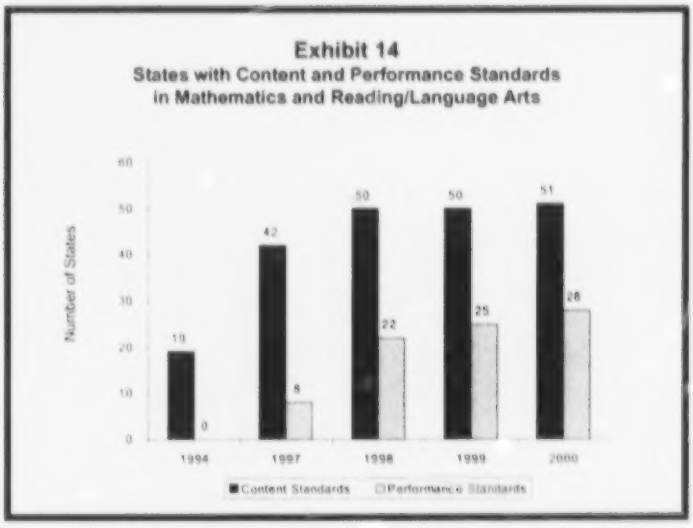

Exhibit reads: By January 2001, 51 states had submitted evidence that content standards were in place, while 28 states had performance standards in place.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, unpublished analysis of state plans required under Sec. 1111; baseline (1994) data obtained from Council of Chief State School Officers, *Status Report: State Systemic Education Improvements* (1995).

Variability in the rigor of standards is a concern, given the lack of evidence that states have benchmarked standards against common criteria. National attention to the development of high standards for all children has resulted in independent reviews and comparisons of the rigor and quality of content standards.

- The Council for Basic Education (CBE) examined the "rigor" of state standards for reading and mathematics by comparing them with the content covered in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and CBE's own "Standards of Excellence in Education." CBE found that state mathematics standards tended to be more rigorous than English language arts standards. In English/language arts, CBE found that of the 42 states they evaluated, seven states had very rigorous standards, 21 states had rigorous standards, and 14 states had standards that were not rigorous. In mathematics, CBE found that of the 43 states they evaluated, 16 states had very rigorous standards, 24 states had rigorous standards, and three states had standards that were not rigorous.[26]

- The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has judged the "quality" of state standards annually for the past five years, based on whether content standards were clear and specific enough to provide the basis for a common core curriculum. In a 1999 report, the AFT concluded that state standards were more likely to meet the AFT criteria in mathematics and science than in English and social studies. State standards met the AFT criteria at all three grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) in 41 states for math, 30 states for science, 21 states for English, and 6 states in social studies. In English, AFT found that 13 states failed to provide any guidance on the basic knowledge and skills students needed to learn at the elementary level to develop into proficient readers. AFT also noted that social studies standards were particularly weak across the states and tended to lack specific references to U.S. and/or world history.[27]

- The Fordham Foundation reviewed state content standards in 1999 for clarity, adequacy of content, mathematical reasoning, and other characteristics. Fordham was the most critical of the three independent reviewers, concluding that only five states combined solid standards with strong accountability. Fordham found that 30 states had a combination of mediocre to poor (or no) standards and weak accountability, while 12 states based high-stakes accountability systems upon mediocre or inferior standards.[28]

The three groups varied in the grades they assigned to standards for individual states, which highlights the difficulty in assessing the quality of standards. Some states, such as Arizona, California, New Hampshire and Virginia received high marks in both mathematics and English/language arts by both CBE and AFT, but most states received different grades across subject areas and reviewers. These differences are partly due to the differing criteria used by the three groups and the subjectivity inherent in the review process. In addition, grades were given to state content standards at different times in their development, and at different levels of detail.[29] Grades given by outside groups should be carefully considered because states have often intentionally developed broadly worded standards to allow significant local discretion in how they are applied.[30]

Development of State Assessment Systems

By the 2000-01 school year, states were required under Title I to adopt or develop student assessments that measure student performance in relation to the state's content and performance standards and to use the assessments as the primary means of evaluating the performance of Title I schools and districts. State assessments are to measure student proficiency in academic subjects in which the state has adopted content and performance standards (at a minimum, reading/language arts and mathematics) and for at least three grade levels (within grades 3-5, grades 6-9, and grades 10-12). Assessments must be aligned with the state content and performance standards, use multiple measures that assess higher order thinking skills, and meet professional standards for technical quality. States are to provide for the participation of all students in the grades being assessed, including students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities, with reasonable adaptations and accommodations. Finally, state assessment systems must enable results to be disaggregated by gender and racial/ethnic group and for students with limited English proficiency, migrant students, students with disabilities vs. students without disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students vs. non-economically disadvantaged students.

The U.S. Department of Education is currently reviewing states' final assessment systems, using a peer review process involving experts in standards, assessments, and Title I. The peer review process does not directly examine a state's assessment instruments. Rather, peer reviewers examine evidence compiled and submitted by each state that is intended to show that its assessment system meets Title I requirements. Peer reviewers provide feedback to help states strengthen their assessment systems, and they advise the Department on the degree to which a state assessment system meets the requirements.

While some systems have been granted full approval, many still require improvement. If certain conditions of the law have not been met but a state can demonstrate how it will meet them by their 2000-01 test administration, the Department may give a state a conditional approval. Some states receive a timeline waiver, allowing a state extra time if the Department determines that they have made significant progress but they are unable to finalize their systems by the 2000-01 test administration. In cases where the state assessment system will not be completed in a timely manner, significant requirements have not been met, and there is no clear plan underway for meeting the requirements, a state may be required to enter into a compliance agreement with the Department that outlines how the state will make the changes necessary to comply with the law.

As of mid-January 2001, the Department had reviewed assessment systems for all of the states and had made decisions for 34 states; the remaining decisions are expected to be completed in spring 2001. Of the 34 states with decisions, 11 states received full approval, six states received conditional approval, 14 states received a timeline waiver, and three states entered into a compliance agreement (Exhibit 15).

Exhibit 15
Status of State Final Assessment Systems

	Number of States	States
Status		
Full Approval	11 states	Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming
Conditional Approval	6 states	Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Washington
Timeline Waiver	14 states	Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota
Compliance Agreement	3 states	California, West Virginia, Wisconsin
Under Review	18 states	Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, D.C., Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, Utah
Issues Underlying Timeline Waivers and Compliance Agreements		
Complete Assessment System (including reading and math at three grade levels, aligned with content and performance standards)	13 states	California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin
Inclusion of Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	13 states	California, Connecticut, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin
Inclusion of Students with Disabilities	10 states	California, Connecticut, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin
Disaggregated Reporting	16 states	California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin

Note: Information is as of January 19, 2001; the status of many states' assessment systems is likely to change shortly as Department reviews are currently in progress.

A number of states have not yet been able to put in place complete assessment systems that meet all of the requirements of the Title I law. Some do not have assessments that meet the Title I requirements in both reading and math at all three required grade levels; a high school test is the most common test that is missing. Some states are using assessments that are not aligned with their content and performance standards, while others do not have performance standards in place. Some states are missing one component in order to complete their assessment system, while others have substantial work left to do.

Inclusion of special populations has been a challenge for states in developing their assessment systems. Thirteen states have received timeline waivers or compliance agreements because they have not yet met the Title I requirements for including LEP students in their assessment and accountability

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systems; 10 states had not met the same requirement for students with disabilities. Indeed, few states met the inclusion requirements when they initially submitted their assessment systems for review, but some states were able to change their inclusion policies or institute better monitoring of local practices in response to concerns raised during the peer review process. Sixteen states are not able to disaggregate assessment data for all of the required categories of students; states most frequently have difficulty disaggregating data for students without disabilities and non-economically disadvantaged students.

The Role of Title I in Holding Schools Accountable for Performance and Supporting Improvement Efforts

Title I, as reauthorized in 1994, is designed to ensure greater school and district accountability for high performance of their students. Linking Title I accountability to state standards and assessments that apply to all children in a state is a key strategy for promoting high expectations for all children and a culture of accountability and improvement. Unlike the earlier Chapter 1 law, accountability under Title I focuses on whether schools receiving Title I funds are making adequate progress toward enabling all of their students to meet the state standards, rather than focusing solely on the Title I program and the yearly performance gains of children receiving specific Title I services.

Under the Title I accountability provisions, states were called upon to establish a framework for rewarding successful schools and districts, identifying schools and districts in need of improvement, and taking corrective actions in those schools and districts that continuously fail to make adequate progress. The performance of districts and schools under Title I is to be publicly reported and widely shared. Ultimately, the most effective accountability strategy relies on those closest to children, that is, parents, teachers, and principals, having sufficient information to understand how their children are performing in relation to state standards, and assuming the responsibility to intervene on an ongoing basis to improve teaching and learning.

Identifying schools in need of improvement is a key feature of the Title I accountability provisions. Each state is required to develop criteria for determining a standard of adequate yearly progress for districts and schools participating in Title I based on the state assessment and other measures.[vi] Title I schools and districts that fail to make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years are to be identified as in need of improvement, and states and districts are expected to provide technical assistance to help them improve. Those schools and districts that continue to be low-performing for three years after being identified for improvement are subject to corrective actions. The improvement designation can be removed for schools that meet adequate yearly progress targets for two of the three years following the initial designation.

Full implementation of the Title I accountability provisions was required by the 2000-01 school year, when final assessments were to be in place. In the interim, schools were to be identified for improvement based on transitional measures of progress adopted by the state and approved by the U.S. Department of Education. As of December 2000, 11 states had submitted their accountability systems for peer review under Ed-Flex. The Department expects to begin reviewing accountability systems for the remaining states in spring 2001.

[vi] States are to define adequate yearly progress in a manner that: (a) results in continuous and substantial yearly improvement of each Title I school and district sufficient to achieve the goal of all children served under Title I, particularly economically disadvantaged and limited-English proficient children, meeting the state's proficient and advanced levels of performance; (b) is sufficiently rigorous to achieve that goal within an appropriate time frame; and (c) links progress primarily to performance on the state's final assessment while permitting progress to be established in part through the use of other measures such as dropout, retention, and attendance rates.

Evaluating the implementation of these accountability systems is a formidable challenge. The Title I accountability requirements are ambitious, and introducing consequences for school performance is a high-stakes endeavor. States face numerous political, technical, and resource issues in devising reliable ways to measure student and school performance, identifying schools in need of improvement, and assisting and intervening to improve low-performing schools.

Although the intent of Title I was to create single accountability systems that would treat all schools in a state equally and hold all students and schools to the same standards for performance, many states have dual accountability systems. In many cases, states' own accountability systems and the systems created to meet the requirements of Title I operate separately and are only somewhat overlapping. About half (28) of the states operate dual systems of accountability in which either: 1) Title I and non-Title I schools are held accountable using different sets of indicators and/or performance standards, or 2) only Title I schools are held accountable by the state or district outside of the performance reporting structure. In some cases, a dual accountability system exists because the Title I accountability requirements are more rigorous than those the state applies for other schools. Research shows that state and local accountability systems tend to be better understood by educators and have more immediate consequences for schools and districts. A lack of clarity and specific consequences for Title I schools that fail to improve during the transitional period may weaken the potential impact of Title I accountability provisions.[31]

States are required to report annually on the number of schools identified for improvement under Title I; however, it is important to recognize that these data (shown in Exhibit 16) do not provide a consistent measure of the number of low-performing schools that can be used to make meaningful comparisons across states or over time, for two reasons:

- First, differences in how states define and measure "low-performing schools" lead to substantial differences across states in the numbers and percentages of schools identified for improvement. In 1998-1999, eight states identified 5 percent or fewer of their Title I schools in need of improvement, while seven states identified a majority of their Title I schools. However, these differences in percentages of schools identified do not necessarily mean that individual states are doing "better" or "worse" than others. Because of variations in state policy, schools with comparable levels of student performance could easily be identified as in need of improvement in one state, but not in another.[VII] Indeed, the wide variation in state definitions of adequate yearly progress and state accountability systems is a direct result of the flexibility that was built into the Title I legislation.

- In addition, state systems for identifying schools for improvement continue to be in transition, as illustrated by substantial changes in the numbers of these identified schools over time. In many states, the number of schools that states reported as identified for improvement changed considerably over the one-year period from 1997-98 to 1998-99. Eighteen states reported an increase of more than 10 percent, while 16 states reported a decrease of more than 10 percent. In 16 states, the increase or decrease was greater than 50 percent. Reasons for these changes vary, but most can be accounted for by changes in the measures states use to identify which schools are low-performing.

[VII] State policies for identifying schools in need of improvement differ in terms of the specific student outcomes measured, the time period for achieving proficiency targets, and the use of absolute versus moving targets. Some states measure student performance solely with a test, while others include attendance and other non-cognitive measures. Some states expect all students to reach proficiency over an extended time, while others set lower, shorter-term goals for their schools. Some states define adequate school progress as meeting an absolute performance goal, while others focus on movement towards a specified target.

Exhibit 16
Schools Identified as in Need of Improvement Under Title I, by State, 1996-97 through 1998-99

State	# of Schools Identified for Improvement			Total Number of Title I Schools	% of Title I Schools in Improvement
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1998-99	1998-99
Alabama	248	26	60	812	7%
Alaska	24	11	8	361	2%
Arizona	42	107			
Arkansas	101	53	499	783	64%
California	330	1307	1307	3865	34%
Colorado	15	13	91	597	15%
Connecticut	95	102	26	422	6%
Delaware	29	39	32	101	32%
D.C.	82	60	100	125	80%
Florida	29	3	73	977	7%
Georgia	236	537	603	1020	59%
Hawaii	37	77	91	138	66%
Idaho	45	44	14	397	4%
Illinois	93	62	727	2259	32%
Indiana	242	257	98	826	12%
Iowa	28	28	148	878	17%
Kansas	147	144	154	687	22%
Kentucky	356	634	615	872	71%
Louisiana	30	162	162	873	19%
Maine	127	307			
Maryland	59	31	18	300	6%
Massachusetts	97	422			
Michigan	641	1048	1523	2011	76%
Minnesota	98	103			
Mississippi	129	108	100	680	15%
Missouri	551	551			
Montana	53	63	62	619	10%
Nebraska	102	80	204	496	41%
Nevada	64	62	35	98	36%
New Hampshire	1	2	4	185	2%
New Jersey	185				
New Mexico	394	182	149	450	33%
New York	410	410			
North Carolina	74	76	46	1030	4%
North Dakota	16	16	20	285	7%
Ohio	680	450	508	2020	25%
Oklahoma	37	81	31	1146	3%
Oregon	29	9			
Pennsylvania	215	204	215	1731	12%
Rhode Island	23	1	34	136	25%
South Carolina	88	97	75	499	15%
South Dakota	10	8	0	396	0%
Tennessee	118	118	17	770	2%
Texas	40	55	61	4141	1%
Utah	7	20	20	232	9%
Vermont	14	10			
Virginia	152	152	150	741	20%
Washington	176	172	71	853	8%
West Virginia	60	146	130	456	29%
Wisconsin	139	211	166	1086	15%
Wyoming	23	36	31	144	22%
Bureau of Indian Affairs	160	148	147	173	85%
Puerto Rico	435	150	200	1406	14%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 1996-97 and 1997-98 *Title I State Performance Reports* and unpublished preliminary tabulations of data reported under 1998-99 *State Consolidated Performance Reports*.

The missing data evident in Exhibit 16 are indicative of problems with the timeliness and accuracy of state-reported data on the number of schools identified for improvement and other basic program information. States are required to submit annual performance reports describing basic program elements such as students served by the program, the number of schoolwide programs vs. targeted assistance programs, and the number of schools and districts identified for improvement. These data are often submitted well after the due date and are often incomplete. As of mid-January 2001, one-fifth of the states had not yet submitted data on the number of schools that were identified for improvement in 1998-99, more than 18 months after the end of that school year and over a year after the reports were due. In addition, state performance reports frequently contain numerous errors that are corrected only after repeated calls to the states, if at all.

A related concern is that districts and schools often do not have a consistent understanding about whether a school has been identified as in need of improvement. A recent survey found that in 41 percent of schools that districts indicated had been identified for improvement under Title I, the principals reported that they had not been identified. Conversely, a number of schools reported that they had been identified for improvement although the district had not listed them as having this status. Districts and schools also frequently disagreed about the number of years that a school had been identified for improvement. Clear communication and accurate reporting are essential ingredients for an effective accountability system, and the above data suggest that there is need for considerable improvement in this area.

States and districts often lack the capacity to provide additional support for all of their low-performing schools. Among schools that indicated that they had been identified as in need of improvement in 1999-2000, less than half (40 percent) reported that they had received additional professional development or other assistance as a result of being identified—a decline from 47 percent in 1998-99.[32] This decline is perhaps unsurprising, given the large increases in many states in the numbers of schools identified; there is likely to be some time lag between identification for improvement and the actual provision of support to help schools improve.

Indeed, the longer a school has been in "school improvement" status, the more likely it is to have received additional assistance; 50 percent of schools that had been identified for three years or more reported receiving assistance, compared with 30 percent of schools that had been identified for only one year.[33] However, it is troubling that even after three years, half of the schools identified as in need of improvement reported that they had not received any additional support as a result.

Limited capacity to serve identified schools may influence state policies about thresholds for determining whether schools are "in need of improvement." Policymakers may determine that there is no point in identifying a large proportion of their schools as low-performing if they only have the capacity to provide meaningful assistance to a much smaller number.

Nevertheless, research findings suggest that state and Title I accountability requirements are helping states, districts, and schools to focus on improving school quality and performance. About three-quarters of schools identified in need of improvement reported that they implemented additional strategies, including more family and community involvement, revising or developing a school plan, more professional development, closer supervision of school decisions, and adopting a new, comprehensive model program.[34] Fifty percent of small poor districts and 47 percent of large poor districts reported that Title I is driving reform in their districts as a whole to a great extent, compared with 14 percent of districts nationally.[35] Research on accountability in 14 districts found that a remarkably high level of attention was being paid to using data to inform decision-making; although outcome data was required for school improvement planning, many districts were going beyond requirements of the law

to use performance data to devise strategies for staff development and curriculum improvement that address gaps in performance.[36]

The Impact of Standards-Based Reform on Teacher Practices and Student Performance

Because the standards-based reform movement generally and the implementation of related Title I provisions are still in the initial stages of implementation, it is too early to draw definitive conclusions about the impact of standards, assessments, and accountability systems on school and student performance. Although six years have passed since the 1994 reauthorization, Congress recognized that considerable time would be needed for states, districts, and schools to complete the challenging task of developing and implementing standards and aligned assessment and accountability systems, and the final deadline for implementation was not until the current school year (2000-01). Moreover, once the initial task of establishing these systems is completed, continued attention needs to be devoted to moving those standards to the classroom, so that teachers' instruction is aligned with the standards and provides students with the opportunity to master the content knowledge that is embodied in the standards and assessments.

Despite the transitional nature of current implementation of standards-based reform, a number of research efforts have explored the impact of these evolving policies on teacher practices and student performance:

- In a study of classroom practices in mathematics and science in 11 states, most teachers surveyed reported that state frameworks and standards and national standards were strong positive influences on their curriculum. Teachers were less positive about the influence of state assessments and a significant portion reported a negative influence; however, in schools identified as having high involvement in their state's initiative for improving math or science education, teachers responded more positively about the influence of state tests. Analysis of teacher reports and state assessment items indicated that the tests covered a narrower range of expectations for students than did reported instruction, with tests focusing more on memorization, facts, and performing procedures and less on solving novel problems and applying skills and concepts. Although instruction covered most of the recommended standards, the level of expectations and the depth of coverage varied widely among schools and classes.[37]

- Another study found that in 21 districts implementing Urban Systemic Initiatives supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF), there was a substantial increase in enrollment and completion of gatekeeping mathematics and science courses over a five-year period, particularly among minority students. For example, the number of students taking Algebra I or above in eighth grade increased by 76 percent across the sites. In all five districts that were able to report six years of consistent assessment data, state assessments showed improved student performance in both mathematics and science.[38] Similarly, a summary of research on the effects of NSF State Systemic Initiatives found that half of the states showed impacts on classroom practice, and that achievement gains were highest in states with intensive professional development and focus on curriculum and materials.[39]

- The *Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance* (LESCP) found mixed results when comparing teacher reports of the visibility of standards and assessments in a sample of 71 high-poverty schools with the performance of their students in reading and mathematics. Teachers who said that they were highly familiar with the standards and assessments and that they believed their curriculum reflected these policies had students who scored higher on initial tests of reading and math in third grade, compared with other students in the sample. However, when looking at student test score gains from third grade to fifth grade, there was no significant difference in students' reading performance between schools whose teachers reported high visibility of standards and assessments and those who reported less visibility of standards and assessments; in mathematics, students had

lesser gains over the two-year period in schools where standards and assessments had the highest reported visibility.[40]

- An analysis of state data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) concluded that in the two states that posted the largest average student achievement gains from 1990 to 1997 (North Carolina and Texas), "the most plausible explanation for the test score gains" were the standards-based reform policies being pursued by each state. These policies included "creating an aligned system of standards, curriculum, and assessments; holding schools accountable for improvement by all students; and critical support from business in developing, implementing, and sustaining these changes over time."[41]

As standards-based reform policies continue to become more fully implemented, future research will need to examine more closely the relationship between the quality of standards and assessments, the degree to which these policies are reflected in school and classroom practices, and their impact on student achievement.

V. Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

There is a growing body of knowledge about the characteristics of effective schools. Indeed, many high-poverty schools are able to bring their students to high levels of achievement, dispelling the myth that the challenges of poverty are an insurmountable barrier to high achievement. The Education Trust, for example, identified 366 high-poverty schools across the nation that were exceeding expectations and enabling their students to learn successfully; common characteristics of these schools are shown below.[42] In another recent study, the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas also found similar approaches used in high-performing, high-poverty urban elementary schools.[43]

Exhibit 17
Key Attributes of Effective, High-Poverty, Title I Schools

High-performing, high-poverty Title I schools:

- Use standards extensively to design curriculum and instruction, assess student work, and evaluate teachers;
- Lengthen instructional time in reading and mathematics as a strategy for increasing the number of students meeting the standards;
- Use the available flexibility in the law to spend more on professional development that can improve instructional practice;
- Have comprehensive systems to monitor students' mastery of standards and provide extra support to students' who need it;
- Tightly focus parental involvement efforts on helping students meet standards by helping parents understand the standards; and
- Tend to be located in districts and/or states that have accountability systems with built-in consequences for school staff.

Source: The Education Trust, in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers, *Dispelling the Myth: High-Poverty Schools Exceeding Expectations* (1999).

The following section examines various strategies for improving teaching and learning that are a focus of current federal policy and support through Title I and related programs. These strategies include: comprehensive, research-based school reform; using promising instructional practices in reading and mathematics; improving the qualifications of instructional staff; early childhood education; extending learning time; and partnerships with parents and families.

Comprehensive, Research-Based School Reform

In the 1980s, researchers and practitioners developed education improvement strategies that were intended to change entire schools as opposed to discrete instructional practices. The federal government, foundations, and non-profit and for-profit institutions such as New American Schools (NAS) and Edison Schools sponsored a plethora of innovative models of comprehensive school reform (CSR). Many of these models were developed specifically for high-poverty schools.

Throughout the 1990s, thousands of schools across the nation have adopted various CSR models. However, implementation of the models has been uneven. A study of the initial implementation of New American Schools' CSR models in four different jurisdictions indicated that only half of the schools were implementing the basic elements of the schoolwide program after the first two years.[44] An analysis of data from 2,500 teachers in 130 schools implementing NAS models showed that the variation in instruction and student achievement was much greater between classrooms than between schools with different CSR models.[45] Studies of the Coalition of Essential Schools also showed that implementation may take hold in a few classrooms but not spread throughout the school. The variation in implementation can be explained, in part, by the many factors that influence the reform process. These include: teacher support for the CSR model, the match between the school and the model, school leadership, and professional development. Because it is difficult to find consistent implementation of CSR models, it can be difficult to assess the effectiveness of a model in turning around a low-performing school.[46]

The varying degrees to which CSR models have been implemented partly explains the fact that there is insufficient rigorous research evidence about the effectiveness of these designs in improving student achievement. A report by the American Institutes of Research found that "even though many of the approaches have been in schools for years, only three out of 24 provide strong evidence of positive effects on student achievement." Six additional programs had research evidence characterized as "promising" (Exhibit 18).[47] This finding does not necessarily mean that the other approaches are ineffective, but rather that there is little rigorous evaluation of these programs. As a result, schools often make decisions and spend tens of thousands of dollars without having much concrete information on how particular strategies will address the improvements they need.

Exhibit 18
Schoolwide Reform Models at a Glance

	Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement[a]	Year Introduced in Schools	Number of Schools	Support Developer Provides Schools	First-Year Costs	First-Year Costs with Current Staff Reassigned
Accelerated Schools (K-8)	P	1986	1,000	P	$27,000	$14,000
America's Choice (K-12)	?	1998	300	S	$190,000	$90,000
ATLAS Communities (PreK-12)	?	1992	63	P	$98,000	$90,000
Audrey Cohen College (K-12)	?	1970	16	P	$161,000	$86,000
Basic Schools Network (K-12)	?	1992	150	P	$12,000	NC
Coalition of Essential Schools (K-12)	M/W	1984	1,000	M	NA	NA
Community for Learning (K-12)	P	1990	92	S	$157,000	$82,000
Co-NECT (K-12)	?	1992	75	S	$588,000	NC
Core Knowledge (K-8)	P	1990	750	P	$56,000	NC
Different Ways of Knowing (K-7)	P	1989	412	S	$84,000	NC
Direct Instruction (K-6)	S	Late '60s	150	P	$244,000	$194,000
Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (K-12)	P	1992	65	S	$81,000	NC
The Foxfire Fund (K-12)	?	1966	NA	M	$65,000	NC
High Schools that Work (9-12)	S	1987	860	S	$48,000	NC
High/Scope (K-3)	M	1967	27	S	$130,000[b]	NC
League of Professional Schools (K-12)	M	1989	158	P	$13,000	NC
Modern Red Schoolhouse (K-12)	?	1993	50	S	$215,000	NC
Onward to Excellence (K-12)	M	1981	1,000	S	$72,000	$60,000
Paideia (K-12)	M/W	1982	80	P	$146,000	$96,000
Roots and Wings (PreK-6)	M	1993	200	S	$270,000	$70,000
School Development Program (K-12)	P	1968	700	P	$45,000	$32,000
Success for All (PreK-6)	S	1987	1,130	S	$270,000	$70,000
Talent Development High School (9-12)	M	1994	10	S	$57,000	$27,000
Urban Learning Centers (PreK-12)	?	1993	13	P	$169,000	$159,000

S=Strong P=Promising M=Marginal M/W=Mixed/Weak ?=No Research NA=Not Available NC=No Change

[a] Although many types of student outcomes are important, evidence of positive effects on student achievement is a key consideration in selecting schoolwide reforms. However, some schools may wish to consider a new approach that has not yet developed strong evidence of effectiveness, but provides the strongest match with school goals.

[b] The estimate for High/Scope assumes a school of 25 K-3 teachers.

Source: Herman et al., *An Educator's Guide to Schoolwide Reform* (1999).

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The 1994 reauthorization allowed Title I to become more flexible so that it could support systemic, schoolwide reform, rather than operating as a stand-alone supplemental program. In particular, the law expanded the use of schoolwide programs by lowering the minimum poverty level at which a Title I school is eligible to use this approach, from 75 percent poverty down to 50 percent. Schoolwide programs, which allow schools to integrate Title I and other resources to support comprehensive school improvement efforts, increased from 10 percent of all Title I schools in 1994-95 to 45 percent in 1997-98. Schoolwide programs now account for a majority of Title I funds allocated to schools (60 percent).[48]

Since 1998, annual appropriations acts have funded the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program to help low-performing schools adopt whole-school strategies to improve student achievement. The CSRD legislation asks schools to coherently address nine key components of school reform that build on what is known from research on effective schools (Exhibit 19). All participating schools must use program funds to adopt or develop research-based comprehensive school reform strategies that employ these nine components. The legislation encourages schools to examine successful comprehensive school reform models that could be adapted to their communities. While the legislation included the names of 17 specific models, schools also are allowed to select other models or to develop their own schoolwide reform programs that include the nine components listed in the law.

Exhibit 19
Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program:
Nine Components of School Reform

- **Research-based methods.** Innovative strategies and proven methods for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on reliable research and effective practices, and that have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics.
- **Comprehensive design.** Schoolwide reform plans that include instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management in a comprehensive approach to addressing the specific needs of the school and enabling all students to meet challenging state content and performance standards.
- **Performance goals.** Measurable goals for student performance and benchmarks for meeting those goals.
- **Staff development.** High-quality and continuous teacher and staff professional development and training.
- **Buy-in.** Support from school faculty, administrators, and staff.
- **Partnerships with families and communities.** Meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning and implementing school improvement activities.
- **External support.** High-quality external support and assistance from a comprehensive school reform entity (which may be a university) with experience in school-wide reform and improvement.
- **Evaluation plan.** Plan to evaluate the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved.
- **Combining resources.** Identification of other available resources (federal, state, local, or private) that can help the school support and sustain the school reform effort.

Source: Public Law 105-78, the Fiscal Year 1998 Appropriations Act for the U.S. Department of Education.

Early implementation data on the CSRD program show that schools with the greatest need are being helped. States are targeting CSRD funds to diverse, high-poverty schools and to schools with a history of low performance. At the school level, data suggest that CSRD grantees are using funds in ways that support the priorities of ESEA and Title I, and are associated with effective schools:[49]

- Most CSRD grants have been made to high-poverty schools with diverse student populations. In 1998-1999, 86 percent of CSRD schools had poverty rates of 50 percent or higher, compared with 53 percent of Title I schools; the average poverty rate in CSRD schools is 70 percent. More than half of CSRD schools reported minority enrollments of more than 75 percent, compared with 20 percent of Title I schools. Across the nation, CSRD grants have been provided to 1,880 schools since 1998.

- States are targeting CSRD funds toward low-performing schools. Forty-two percent of CSRD school principals indicated that their schools had been identified for improvement under Title I, compared with 10 percent of principals in Title I schools overall. The length of time in school improvement status tended to be longer for CSRD schools than for Title I schools.

- Most CSRD schools also receive Title I funds. In 1998-99, 92 percent of CSRD schools were Title I schools, and 78 percent of CSRD schools were Title I schoolwide programs.

CSRD schools are implementing nearly 300 different model programs, but most schools have chosen from a much smaller number of nationally known models. More than 72 percent of grantees are implementing one of just 30 models. About half (46 percent) of grantees are implementing one of the 17 models included in the legislation. Thirty-six percent of schools are using a model rated as strong or promising.[50]

Promising Instructional Practices in Reading and Mathematics

To help all students meet challenging academic standards, it is critical that teachers use the most effective, research-based instructional practices in reading and mathematics. Effective instruction will move students toward the national goals of reading well and independently by the third grade, and mastering challenging mathematics by the eighth grade.

Recent syntheses of reading research supported by the National Research Council and the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) suggest the need for a balanced approach that exposes children to the sound structure of words and builds conceptual knowledge and comprehension. In mathematics instruction, expert opinion calls for orienting curriculum and instruction toward students' conceptual understanding and mathematical reasoning. Exhibits 20 and 21 present some more specific tenets of effective instruction in reading and mathematics.

Within these frameworks for instruction, there are many ways to teach content, particularly given the different levels of student and teacher proficiency. Recent research on effective schoolwide programs and schools found more differences than similarities in the instructional approaches used across the schools, and found that instructional strategies were not the essential factors in schools' effectiveness.[51] However, there are probably some qualities that are characteristic of most high-quality instruction. According to recent data, all children benefit from exposure to challenging content that develops their thinking and problem-solving skills. Comprehensive, research-based approaches to improve curriculum and instruction are likely to employ strategies that develop these skills.

Exhibit 20
Reading Instruction

Years of research on reading instruction have led to a consensus about the skills and abilities children must demonstrate to be successful readers and therefore the skills that high-quality reading instruction must foster in young children. Children need excellent instruction from qualified and effective teachers who deliberately plan their instruction and target their instructional materials and methods to meet the diverse needs of children. These teachers:

- Give children access to a variety of reading and writing materials.
- Present explicit instruction for reading and writing, both in the context of authentic and isolated practice.
- Create multiple opportunities for sustained reading practice in a variety of formats.
- Carefully choose instructional-level text from a variety of materials.
- Adjust the grouping and explicitness of instruction to meet the needs of individual students.

An effective reading curriculum in the early grades includes explicit instruction in the following topics: how to recognize letters and understand the letter-sound correspondence and its use in reading and spelling, understanding the smallest sound components of spoken words, developing vocabulary, and reading for meaning.

Source: National Research Council, *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (1998); National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read* (2000).

Exhibit 21
Mathematics Instruction

Recent research has identified a set of principles and practices that are critical to effective mathematics instruction. [52] Teachers need to increase their knowledge about mathematics and pedagogy, learn from their students and colleagues, and hold high expectations for all students. The mathematics curriculum should be coherent and well-articulated across the grades. It needs to introduce ideas in such a way that they build on one another and students can learn increasingly more sophisticated mathematical ideas as they progress through school. More specifically, effective instruction means:

- Focusing on problem solving. Students need conceptual understanding to deal with novel problems and settings and to become autonomous learners. Instruction should encourage multiple solutions to problems.
- Defining basic skills to involve more than computation.
- Emphasizing reasoning and thinking skills, concept development, communicating mathematically, and applying mathematics. Students must learn mathematics with understanding, building new knowledge from experience and prior knowledge.
- Presenting content in a logical progression with an increasing emphasis on higher-order thinking skills, such as problem-solving and mathematical reasoning, and mathematical communication.
- Integrating topics of numeration, patterns and relations, geometry, measurement, probability and statistics, algebra, and algorithmic thinking. Instruction should broaden the range of the mathematical content studied, an aspect of teaching in which low-income children are often short-changed.
- Taking advantage of calculators and computers to extend students' mathematical reach.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century, *Before It's Too Late: A Report to the Nation from the National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teachers for the 21st Century* (2000); National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* (2000); and Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory, "Project Application for the Comprehensive School Mathematics Programs," submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, National Diffusion Network (1992).

While there is little research on the quality of instruction in typical high-poverty schools, a recent study of 71 high-poverty schools (the *Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance*) examined instruction in reading and math in third through fifth grades, and the relationship between instructional practices and student achievement: [53]

- In reading, there is evidence that continuing to spend too much time on basic decoding skills past the early grades is detrimental to students, and that comprehension and higher-level thinking skills should be the focus of reading instruction. Students whose fifth-grade teachers spent a great deal of time instructing the class at a basic level—using worksheets, reading aloud, and using other relatively routine skill practice—gained slightly less on average than those whose teachers spent an average amount of time instructing the class at a basic level.

- In mathematics, the use of more student-initiated activities and more complicated assignments had a positive relationship to student gains. Such activities include the use of manipulatives to demonstrate

a concept, discussing multiple approaches to solving a problem, working on problems in small groups to find a joint solution, and having student-led group discussions. Students whose fifth-grade teachers reported high levels of exploration in mathematics instruction had larger gains in math scores than other students in the sample.

- Also, a high level of exploration in third-grade mathematics instruction was associated with higher third-grade scores in the highest-poverty schools. In contrast, where fifth-grade teachers reported high levels of more routine activities (presentation and practice activities such as lecturing, leading whole group discussions, demonstrating an exercise at a blackboard, practicing and drilling on computational skills), students in the highest-poverty schools gained less.

Improving the Qualifications of Instructional Staff

Parents, policymakers, and educators agree that every child needs a competent and well-qualified teacher in the classroom. Research shows that the quality of teaching is the most important in-school factor in improving student achievement.[54] Students perform better with more highly skilled teachers: teachers' performance on statewide exams, and particularly their mastery of language skills, has a positive and statistically significant effect on students' reading and mathematics test scores. The effect of a teacher's proficiency on student achievement is greatest in the primary grades and declines after the seventh grade.[55] In addition, teacher quality appears to have a greater effect on students who are at-risk than on other students.[56]

Although the need for high-quality teachers is particularly great in high-poverty schools, research suggests that a disproportionate number of teachers in these schools are inexperienced and lack proper certification. Principals in the highest-poverty schools reported that 15 percent of elementary school teachers and 21 percent of secondary school teachers had less than three years' teaching experience, compared with only 8 percent of elementary and 9 percent of secondary teachers in low-poverty schools. In addition, in high-poverty schools, 12 percent of secondary teachers held temporary or emergency certification and 18 percent were teaching out-of-field, compared with only 1 percent of secondary teachers in low-poverty schools who had either temporary or emergency certification or were teaching out-of-field.[57]

Another concern related to the quality of instructional staff is the widespread use of Title I funds for paraprofessionals as part of schools' instructional programs. Paraprofessionals account for half of the instructional staff hired through Title I funds, and high-poverty schools rely more heavily on aides than do low-poverty schools. In the highest-poverty schools, 84 percent of principals reported using aides, compared with 54 percent in low-poverty schools.[58] On average, the highest-poverty elementary schools employed 16.5 teacher aides in a typical-size school of 500 students, including 2.3 aides funded by Title I, while low-poverty schools employed 7.6 aides overall and 1.6 aides funded by Title I.[59]

Although few Title I teacher aides have the educational background necessary to teach students, almost all (98 percent) reported that they were teaching or helping to teach students. Overall, providing instruction accounted for 60 percent of Title I aides' time, and 41 percent of aides reported that half or more of this time was spent working with students on their own, without a teacher present (Exhibit 22).[60]

Exhibit 22
Amount of the Time that Title I Aides Spent Teaching or Helping to Teach Students that Was on Their Own, Without a Teacher Present

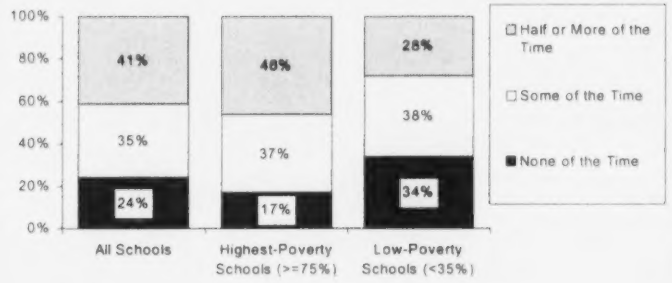

Exhibit reads: Forty-one percent of Title I teacher aides reported that half or more of the time they spent teaching or helping to teach students was on their own, without a teacher present.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service (2000), *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report.*

Schools may choose to rely on paraprofessionals in part because they cost much less than a certified teacher; the average annual salary for a full-time equivalent teacher aide was $12,600 in 1997-98, compared with $36,400 for a teacher. However, research has found little or no student achievement gains associated with including paraprofessionals in the classroom. In a rigorous, randomized-design study in Tennessee, students in K-2 classes with full-time aides did no better than students in classes without aides.

Paraprofessionals can play a helpful role in the classroom if used in ways that are appropriate to their training and experience. In particular, paraprofessionals are in a unique position to serve as translators and interpreters for limited English proficient students and their families; in major urban and rural areas, 60 to 70 percent of paraprofessionals are from racial- and language-minority groups.[61] Typically drawn from the local community, paraprofessionals are also well-positioned to work with parents. Currently, however, a relatively small number of Title I paraprofessionals are "parent liaisons" (3 percent), and teacher aides who also work with parents report spending very little time in this role.[62]

Ongoing professional training and development for teachers and other school staff is important for achieving high standards of learning for all students. There is wide consensus on the key features of high-quality professional development, reflecting what has been learned from the best available research and practices in the field. One recent study identified six key features of professional development that were linked to increases in teachers' self-reported knowledge, skills, and changes in teaching practice (Exhibit 23).

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Exhibit 23
Key Features of High-Quality Professional Development

- **Strong content focus.** Professional development should focus on improving and deepening teachers' content knowledge in a subject area.
- **Long duration.** Professional development should include a high number of contact hours and should span a long period of time.
- **Collective participation of groups of teachers.** Professional development should include groups of teachers from the same school, department, or grade level.
- **Active learning opportunities.** Professional development should include opportunities for teachers to become actively engaged in analyzing teaching and learning.
- **"Reform-type" activities.** Professional development should focus on "reform-type" activities, such as study groups, mentoring, or internships, as opposed to the traditional workshop.
- **Coherence with other activities.** Professional development activities should be aligned with standards and assessments.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Designing Effective Professional Development: Lessons from the Eisenhower Program* (1999).

Despite a strong knowledge base on best practices, there is great variability in the nature and quality of professional development, and many teachers are not receiving the highest quality professional development possible. Among teachers who participated in professional development activities during the 1997-98 school year:

- Only 51 percent reported participating in activities that emphasized content knowledge.
- Only 20 percent spent at least six months in these activities.
- Only 20 percent participated with other teachers in their grade level or department.
- Only 5 percent participated in activities that promoted active learning; thus, most teachers lacked an opportunity to become actively engaged in analyzing teaching and learning.
- Only 22 percent participated in "reform-type" activities, whereas most attended traditional workshops and conferences.
- Only 31 percent reported that activities built upon prior professional development experiences, with a somewhat higher percentage (53 percent) reporting that professional development was followed up with later activities.[63]

In addition, teachers in high-poverty schools were less likely to have opportunities for professional growth—defined as staff collegiality, support for innovation, influence in policymaking, and supportive in-service experiences—than their colleagues in low-poverty schools.[64] In Title I schools, a significantly higher percentage of secondary school teachers in the highest-poverty schools reported that they would have liked additional professional development, compared with teachers in low-poverty secondary schools (69 percent, compared with 50 percent).[65]

However, there is evidence that when high-quality professional development does occur, it can have a positive impact on teaching practices. Longitudinal research shows that when professional development is of high-quality and is focused on specific, higher-order teaching strategies—such as the use of technology, instructional methods, and assessment strategies for higher-order learning—professional development increases teachers' use of those strategies in the classroom.[66]

Evidence from Title I schools also supports the finding that professional development can improve teaching. For example, about half of teachers in Title I schools reported that professional development led them to change their teaching practices. Professional development appeared to be especially effective in increasing teachers' use of technology, with almost 65 percent of teachers reporting this positive change.[67] In both reading and mathematics, when teachers received high-quality professional development, students made greater test score gains. This occurred when teachers received professional development that focused on instructional content; supported local reform efforts; supported state or district standards, assessments, or curriculum frameworks; helped teachers adapt their teaching to standards or assessments; and gave them confidence in using new teaching approaches.[68]

The U.S. Department of Education supports professional development activities through several programs, including the Eisenhower Professional Development Program, Title I, the Reading Excellence Act, the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, and the Class Size Reduction program, among others. The Eisenhower Program, which is the Department's largest investment solely in professional development, provided $485 million in funding in FY 2001. Title I districts and schools reported using 3 percent of their Title I funds for professional development, amounting to $212 million in 1997-98.[69]

Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education for *all* preschool children is critical to building a solid foundation for learning in elementary school and beyond. Research on child development reveals that children who have high-quality early learning experiences, including a language and literacy-rich environment, are more likely to be successful learners when they are older and are less likely to have difficulty learning to read.[70] Research on child care, preschool, and early intervention programs has shown that early care and education programs can improve children's school readiness, achievement scores, and social development.[71]

Several long-term studies of high-quality early childhood education programs have demonstrated significant impacts on educational outcomes throughout a child's life. A 1995 review of 36 studies of model demonstration projects and large-scale public programs found that early childhood programs can produce long-term effects on academic achievement, grade retention, placement in special education, and social adjustment.[72] Another long-term study found that a high-quality child care and education program that served children from infancy through age 5 continues to demonstrate positive effects at age 21, compared with a control group that did not receive early intervention.[73]

The quality and intensity of early childhood care and education are critical. The *Cost, Quality, and Outcomes* study found that "children in lower quality classrooms scored lower on measures of cognitive and social development, even after taking into account differences in background factors known to be related to children's development."[74] Children who attended child care with higher quality classroom practices had better language and math skills from the preschool years into elementary school.[75]

Moreover, the study found that child care quality may be particularly important for children at risk of school failure.[76] At-risk children are more likely to start kindergarten with weak cognitive and literacy skills than other children, and therefore stand to benefit more from high-quality early childhood education programs.[77] A recent study of kindergartners confirmed the importance of early education for later performance in school. It demonstrated that children begin kindergarten with different levels of knowledge and skills based on their background, and while the more disadvantaged children catch up on basic skills in reading and mathematics during the kindergarten year, the gap widens on measures of more sophisticated reading and mathematics knowledge and skills.[78]

The National Research Council's report, *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*, synthesized findings from a wide range of research on early childhood education in order to determine the components of high-quality early childhood education programs; these components are summarized in Exhibit 24.

Most children in the United States are not in settings of sufficient quality to improve learning. The *Eager to Learn* report warned that the growing understanding of the importance of early education "stands in stark contrast to the disparate system of care and education" available to the nation's preschool children. The report stated that many children from low-income families are in child care programs "of such low quality that learning and development... may even be jeopardized."[79]

Exhibit 24
Features of High-Quality Early Childhood Education Programs

- Cognitive, social-emotional, and motor development are complementary, mutually supportive areas of growth all requiring active attention in the preschool years. Social skills and physical dexterity influence cognitive development, just as cognition plays a role in children's social understanding and motor competence. Therefore all are related to early learning and later academic achievement and are necessary domains of early childhood pedagogy.
- Responsive interpersonal relationships with teachers nurture young children's dispositions to learn and their emerging abilities. Social competence and school achievement are influenced by the quality of early teacher-child relationships, and by teachers' attentiveness to how the child approaches learning.
- Class size and adult-child ratios are correlated with greater program effects. Low adult-child ratios are associated with more extensive teacher-child interaction, more individual attention, and less restrictive and controlling teacher behavior. Smaller group size has been associated with more child-initiated behavior, and more opportunities for teachers to work on developing children's language skills, mediating children's social interactions, and encouraging and supporting exploration and problem-solving.
- While no single curriculum or pedagogical approach can be identified as best, children who attend well-planned, high-quality early childhood programs in which curriculum goals are clear and are linked across subject areas tend to learn more and are better prepared to successfully master the complex demands of schooling.
- Teachers' professional development is related to the quality of early childhood programs, and program quality predicts developmental outcomes for children. Formal training in early childhood education has been linked consistently to positive caregiver behaviors. The strongest relationship is found between the length of a teacher's training in the field and the appropriateness of his or her classroom behavior.
- Programs found to be highly effective in the United States and abroad actively engage teachers and provide high-quality supervision. Teachers are trained and encouraged to reflect on their practice and on the responsiveness of their children to classroom activities, and to revise and plan their teaching accordingly.

Source: National Research Council, *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers* (2000).

In addition, poor children are less likely to participate in preschool programs than higher income children. Participation rates for children from poor families increased from 44 percent in 1991 to 52 percent in 1999, but remain well below the 62 percent participation rate for non-poor children.[80] Yet, the highest-poverty schools are more likely than low-poverty schools to offer preschool programs (61 percent vs. 14 percent), and they also served a greater percentage of their estimated preschool population (24 percent vs. 3 percent).[81] Taken together, these two data sources suggest that poor children are more likely to participate in public school preschool programs, while children from higher-income families are more likely to participate in private or non-school preschool programs. Homeless children may have the greatest difficulty in gaining access to early childhood education; state coordinators in more than two dozen states indicated that it was difficult for homeless children to access Head Start and other publicly-funded preschool programs or Even Start or other family literacy programs.[82]

Federal agencies spent a total of about $9 billion to provide education and care to children under age five in fiscal year 1999.[83] These programs include programs categorized as education and child care, and do not necessarily contain a cognitive or pre-literacy skills component. Most of these programs are administered by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The programs that serve the greatest number of children under age five include the Child Care and Development Fund (1,260,000), Head Start (780,000), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Grants to States (575,000), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (350,000), Title I Part A (300,000), IDEA Preschool Grants (316,000), IDEA Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (187,000), Title I Migrant Education (69,000), and Even Start (27,000).[84] It is worth noting that although Title I's major focus is not on preschool programs, it serves a significant number of preschool-age children, even more than the Even Start program, for which early childhood education is one of the major components.

The Even Start Family Literacy Program (Title I, Part B) supports a comprehensive family literacy model to serve low-income families with children from birth through age seven. The Even Start program provides support to states and local grantees (partnerships of both a local educational agency and a nonprofit community-based organization) for family literacy programs intended to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy in low-income families. The program is designed to support high-quality, intensive instructional programs of adult education, parenting education, and early childhood education, including interactive literacy activities between parents and their children. Even Start is based on the notion that all of these instructional components, including early childhood education, are necessary to make changes in a family.

The national evaluation of Even Start has documented that Even Start projects successfully target services toward families who are most in need. At least 85 percent of families participating in 1998-99 had incomes at or below the federal poverty level, and 85 percent of 1998-99 new enrollees had not earned a high school diploma or GED at Even Start entry.[85]

Evidence on Even Start's impact on literacy outcomes for children and adults is mixed. On measures of literacy used in the first and second national evaluations of Even Start, participating families consistently made gains each year. However, results from a small-scale experimental study in five projects during the first national evaluation (the in-depth study) did not always indicate that these gains were due to Even Start participation alone.[86]

- In terms of adult literacy, Even Start adults achieved statistically significant gains on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) reading and math tests. However, in the in-depth study, adults in a control group achieved similar gains on the CASAS, suggesting that the gains for Even Start adults may not be due only to Even Start participation.

- In the past decade, Even Start helped many adults attain a GED. Depending on the year, between 8 percent and 15 percent of all of the adults who entered Even Start without a GED or diploma attained one. In the in-depth study, significantly more adults in Even Start than in the control group attained a GED (22 percent vs. 6 percent).

- Both the first and second national evaluations showed that Even Start children learned school readiness skills such as colors, shapes, and sizes (as measured by statistically significant gains on the PreSchool Inventory (PSI)) significantly faster than would be expected on the basis of normal development. After one year of participation, Even Start children in the in-depth study scored significantly higher on the PSI than children in a randomly assigned control group. However, control group children caught up in the next year, when they entered preschool or kindergarten. A similar pattern was found on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, a test of receptive language.

- In the second national evaluation, Even Start families gained a substantial amount on the Home Screening Questionnaire (HSQ), a measure of the quality of cognitive stimulation and emotional support provided to children by the family. This appears to be larger than would be expected without Even Start, because data from the national evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Development Program show that low-income families in the control group did not make any gains on the HSQ.

Working with needy families, as Even Start does, poses challenges to providing intensive services and engaging families over an extended period of time. Although Even Start projects have increased the amount of instruction they have offered in all core service areas over time, less than half met the U.S. Department of Education's performance indicator for the early childhood education component (47 percent), parenting education component (46 percent), or adult education component (which ranged from 22 percent for English as a Second Language to 43 percent for Adult Secondary Education services).[87] Data for the cohort of families who enrolled in the program in 1997-98 showed that 71 percent left the program after having participated for 12 or fewer months.[88] Research has shown that service intensity and duration can contribute to better outcomes, and Even Start projects may achieve greater effects if they can find ways to retain families in the program for a longer period of time.

Extending Learning Time

The increasing emphasis on challenging standards for all students has led to growing recognition of the need for additional time for instruction and support. Relying exclusively on learning during the school day is simply not sufficient for all students to reach high standards. Extended learning time programs are a potentially promising strategy to provide the needed extra instructional time and additional learning opportunities, particularly for lower-achieving students.

In fact, nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of all Title I schools offer extended-time instructional or tutorial programs during the school year. However, these programs serve a small proportion of all students. Extended-time programs offered during the school year (through before-school, after-school, or weekend programs) serve 8 percent of the students in Title I schools and 14 percent of the students in the highest-poverty schools. Similarly, summer school programs are offered in 61 percent of all Title I schools; these programs serve 15 percent of the students in Title I schools and 12 percent of the students in the highest-poverty schools.[89]

Exhibit 25
Extended-Time Instructional Programs During the School Year: Availability and Participation, 1997-98

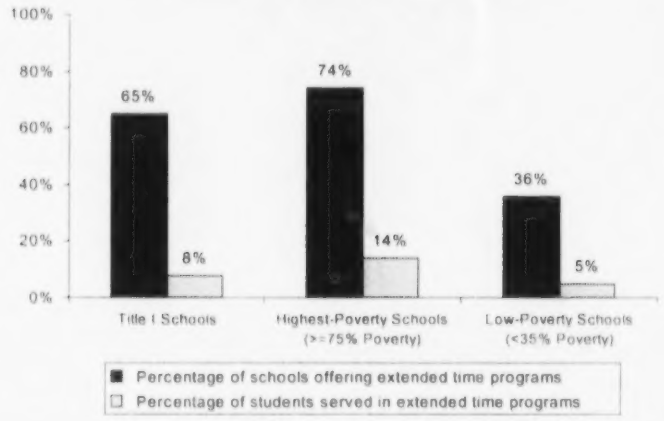

Exhibit reads: Nearly two-thirds of all Title I schools (65 percent) offered before-school, after-school, or weekend instructional programs, but these programs served only 8 percent of all students.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report* (2000).

High-quality extended-learning programs include standards-based educational enrichment and academic assistance of sufficient duration and intensity. Successful programs connect the added time to regular school experiences so that teachers can build on the skills that students are gaining in their regular classes and supplement what they are learning during the school day. Using teachers and paraprofessionals from the regular school day as program staff can facilitate this linkage. Additional elements of successful programs include low student/staff ratios to enable small group or individual instruction, parental involvement, and incentives for student enrollment and continued attendance.

The push for more extended learning programs has prompted an increase in research on the relationship between such programs and improved in-school outcomes. The findings, although promising, are not definitive. Some outcomes are positive while others are unchanged or negative. The inconsistent nature of the findings is not surprising, considering various design and analysis complications. Studies that rely on pre-post designs may reflect student maturation or the effects of other, non-program events rather than the effects of the extended learning program. Studies comparing program participants and non-participants are subject to selection bias concerns.[30]

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program was authorized under the 1994 reauthorization of ESEA to encourage schools and community organizations to work together to expand opportunities for after-school, weekend, or summer programs for children, youth, and families. Academic enrichment for at-risk youth is the primary focus of these programs, but they also include recreational, health, social, and cultural services to meet the needs of the surrounding community. The 21st Century program is one of the U.S. Department of Education's fastest-growing programs, rising from an initial appropriation of

$40 million in FY 1998 to $846 million in FY 2001. The program currently provides support for 903 communities and 3,600 schools across the country through competitive grants. These 21st Century Community Learning Centers will serve about 615,000 children and youth and 215,000 adults during the 2000-01 school year.

Partnerships with Parents and Families

Thirty years of research have established a clear link between parent or family involvement and student achievement.[91] Recent research also has shown that parenting style, participation in learning activities, and parents' expectations for the child have a stronger influence on student achievement than uncontrollable family-related factors such as socioeconomic status.[92] Further, not only have we learned that parental support, participation, and expectations around their child's learning are linked to increased student achievement, research has shown that schools' policies, programs, and interventions can have a positive influence on increasing these parent behaviors.[93]

However, students in high-poverty schools, who could benefit significantly from family involvement, are less likely to have involved parents. A Harris poll of teachers found that 62 percent of inner-city teachers felt that parental support for their schools was either fair or poor, while in suburban schools, 80 percent of teachers felt that parental support was either excellent or good.[94] In another survey, principals in the highest-poverty schools were more likely to report low parent involvement in regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences (73 percent, compared with 33 percent in low-poverty schools) and in parent volunteering (45 percent vs. 20 percent).[95] Students whose parents have less education are less likely to spend time at home on learning-related activities that reinforce their schoolwork. Children aged 6-8 whose parents have less than a high school diploma spend one-third the amount of time reading and 50 percent more time watching television, compared with children from college-educated families. Among older children aged 9-12, children whose parents have less education are less likely to study and spend less time studying.[96]

The 1994 reauthorization revised Title I parent involvement provisions from a previous focus on governance to a greater emphasis on the role of family involvement in children's learning. The current law supports parent involvement through three key mechanisms: (1) requiring districts and schools to have a parent policy that integrates parent involvement with other programs, and includes parent involvement strategies in the school improvement plan; (2) communicating shared responsibilities between schools and parents through the use of school-parent compacts; and (3) building the capacity of schools and districts to reach out more effectively to parents and families and building parents' capacity for supporting their children's educational growth through parenting education, literacy training, and other approaches.

Schools report using a variety of strategies for reaching out to parents. Most Title I schools reported providing parents with a variety of school documents, including the school plan or school improvement plan (93 percent), school report cards or performance profiles (85 percent), and information on content or performance standards (83 percent). Schools with significant numbers of limited English proficient students usually reported translating school documents into languages other than English (87 percent of elementary schools with 25 percent or more LEP students), although this was somewhat less common at the secondary level (66 percent). When asked about parent involvement strategies, principals were somewhat more likely to report having parents serve on committees (98 percent) and as volunteers in the classroom (94 percent) and less likely to train parents to work with their children at home (88 percent) or to provide family night activities such as family math nights (75 percent).[97]

The use of school-parent compacts increased from 20 percent of Title I schools in 1994 to 73 percent in 1999, but schools need to use compacts effectively. Principals are more likely than teachers to report that school-parent compacts are useful. Eighty-six percent of principals reported that their schools use compacts for parent-teacher conferences. However, a smaller percentage of teachers in those schools reported actually using the school-parent compact (53 percent). Among those teachers, 46 percent said they found the compacts "useful" and 30 percent said the compacts were useful "to a great extent" in discussing the shared responsibilities among the parent, the student, and themselves.[98]

Empirical studies suggest that compacts can have a positive impact on parent involvement and student achievement, particularly if the compacts are well-implemented. A recent study found a significant relationship between school use of parent compacts and other outreach strategies with parent involvement in their child's learning at home, which in turn was related to an increase in the child's reading achievement. Analysis of data from the *Prospects* study, a rigorous longitudinal study of more than 25,000 students in the early elementary grades, showed that students in schools with family-school compacts had higher levels of achievement on independently administered tests than students in schools without compacts.[99] Case studies suggest that particularly dramatic results may occur when compacts are used to drive concerted efforts to involve parents and families. For example, teachers and administrators at Samuel Mason Elementary School in Boston credit their compact-driven family involvement activities as providing a catalyst for increases in reading scores from the lowest third to the upper third of all Boston schools, and an improvement in the retention rate between grades 1 and 2 from 33 percent to close to zero. More broadly, the *Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance* found that low-achieving students in high-poverty schools made greater gains between third and fifth grade if their third-grade teachers were especially active in contacting their parents.

In general, however, teachers are more likely to interact with parents to address a student problem, rather than to engage parents on a continuous basis. For example, elementary teachers in the highest-poverty Title I schools were more likely to report initiating phone calls to parents when a child is having problems (98 percent) than working with parents to set learning goals for students at the beginning of the year (66 percent).[100]

Teachers generally do not receive effective professional development on strategies for improving parent involvement. About 45 percent of teachers in Title I schools reported receiving professional development on parent involvement, and of these teachers, less than 30 percent said that it led them to change their practice.[101]

VI. Special Title I Services

Title I Services for Students Attending Private Schools

Federal law requires that students in private schools be afforded an opportunity to participate in Title I equal to students in public schools, and the services provided to them also must be equitable. Services for private school students accounted for about 1 percent of Title I funds in 1997-98.[102]

Court rulings have had a substantial impact on the participation of private school students in Title I. In June 1997, a U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Agostini v. Felton* case added considerable flexibility to districts' options for providing Title I services to eligible students enrolled in private schools. In the previous *Aguilar v. Felton* decision in 1985, the court had restricted service locations for students in religiously-affiliated schools, resulting in a sharp decline in the number of private school students participating in Title I. In *Agostini*, the court reversed that ruling, deciding that the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment does not prohibit providing Title I services in space located in religious schools. As a result, parents of private school students, as well as the private schools themselves, were more willing to have their students participate in the Title I program because children no longer had to travel to neutral space and services could be provided in a less disruptive manner.

Private school student participation increased by 15 percent after the 1997 *Agostini* decision, from 167,600 students in 1996-97 to 193,100 in 1997-98 (Exhibit 26). Looking at the longer-term trend, private school student participation after the 1997 *Agostini* decision returned to about the same level as prior to the *Aguilar* decision.[103]

Exhibit 26
Number of Private School Students Receiving Title I Services, 1982-83 to 1997-98

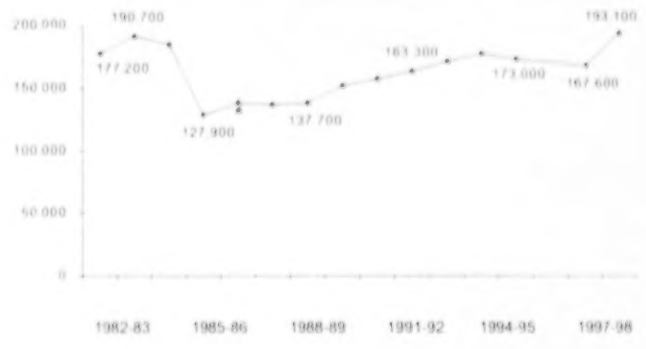

Exhibit reads: The number of private school students participating in Title I rose to 193,100 in 1997-98, returning to a level not seen since 1983-84.
Source: U.S. Department of Education, *1997-98 Title I Performance Report* (2000).

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The 1994 reauthorization changed the provisions for allocating Title I funds for services for both public school and private school students, linking funding to the number of low-income students residing in school attendance areas instead of the number of low-achieving students. Initially, the number of private school participants declined after this change, from 177,200 in 1993-94 to 167,600 in 1996-97. However, in the following year, participation rose substantially (after the *Agostini* decision). Overall, the number of private school participants has risen by 9 percent since the 1994 reauthorization, from 177,200 in 1993-94 to 193,100 in 1997-98.[104]

Almost all districts that serve eligible private school students provide them with supplementary academic instruction. A preliminary review of the experiences of nine large urban districts indicated that most were taking advantage of the opportunity to provide instructional services on the premises of religiously affiliated schools. However, Title I administrators in these districts also reported that they continue to provide at least some of the instructional services in neutral sites on or near the school grounds, with several of the districts relying more heavily on these facilities than others.[105]

Most Title I administrators and private school representatives agree that they have established positive working relationships, but differ about who is actually involved in consultation and about the topics that are discussed. For example, Title I administrators in at least 80 percent of districts say that they consulted with either a private school principal or representative of a private school organization on most issues, but substantially fewer private school representatives report such consultation.[106]

Migrant Education Program (Title I, Part C)

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) provides formula grants to states for supplemental education and support services for the children of migrant agricultural workers and fishers. MEP's mission is to strengthen and support efforts of state education agencies, local school districts, schools, and community organizations to continuously improve the quality of education provided to migrant children. Its goal is to help all migrant students meet challenging academic standards and graduate from high school (or a GED program) with an education that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment. To help migrant students reach challenging standards, the 1994 reauthorization established a priority for services for migrant children whose education has been interrupted during the school year and who are failing, or at risk of failing, to meet their states' content and performance standards. There is some indication that this priority is being met. According to 80 percent of principals of schoolwide programs, migrant students who fail to meet their state's performance standards have the highest priority for instructional services.[107]

States operated 12,200 local MEP projects in 1997-98 and served a total of 621,000 students. Of those projects, 54 percent served students only during the regular school year, 35 percent served participants both during the regular term and during the summer, and 11 percent of projects operated during the summer term only. About 23 percent of all MEP projects operated as part of a schoolwide program, wherein MEP funds are combined with other federal funds (including Title I, Part A).[108]

MEP summer-term and extended-time projects play an important role in the education of migrant students. Summer projects provide academic and support services to improve instructional continuity for migrant students and to address the unique needs that result from their migratory lifestyles. In 1997-98, most summer projects provided instruction in reading (96 percent), other language arts (88 percent), and math (87 percent).[109] Over the past decade, summer projects have grown faster than the regular program, and they now serve approximately 50 percent of the number of students served during the regular term. The number of summer participants increased from 220,800 in the 1995-96 school year to 312,400 in 1997-98.[110]

A concern about whether migrant students' needs were being met in schoolwide programs prompted a Congressionally mandated evaluation of schoolwide schools that enroll migrant students. The 1997 study found that migrant children were served and did receive supplemental academic and support services, but it was unclear whether their unique needs were being met. Most of the school staff did not view the educational or support service needs of migrant students as significantly different than those of other students, and many were unable to identify migrant students in their schools. Migrant students' needs for supplemental services were assessed in the same ways as other students, without particular attention to the differences associated with the migratory lifestyle. The perception that migrant students do not have unique needs may exist because schools often did not disaggregate their needs assessment data for migrant students. However, in the schools in which migrant staff or migrant parents participated in the schoolwide planning process, schoolwide plans were much more likely to address the needs of migrant students (80 percent of the schools with involvement, versus only 34 percent of the schools with no involvement addressed the migrant students' needs).[111]

In most states that track migrant students' achievement, migrant students perform significantly lower than other students on state assessments. In 1997-98, 16 states tracked the achievement of their migrant students by disaggregating their assessment results by migrant status. The disparity between migrant students and other students varied a great deal among states, with some states showing differences as large as 30 percentage points while others showed more modest differences of less than 10 percentage points.[112] A recent study of Title I schools serving high numbers of migrant students found that these schools were more likely than other Title I schools to report that content and performance standards were too rigorous for most of their students, and to cite student mobility, diversity of student populations, and language as barriers in using content standards with all students.[113]

Although they provide an indication of migrant student performance, state assessment results may not represent a complete and accurate picture of migrant students' performance in each state because estimates of the degree to which migrant students participate in state assessments are not yet available. While many states track migrant students' performance, most do not track the extent of their inclusion in state assessments. Factors that present barriers to migrant students' inclusion in state assessments are the same factors that hinder their performance, including their limited English proficiency and mobility. While language accommodations are made for migrant students in many states (29 MEP administrators reported migrant students could take state assessments in their native language in 1998),[114] accommodations for student mobility are less common. Some migrant students do not participate in state assessments because they change schools during the spring, when state assessments are often given, while others may be exempted if they are new to the United States, new to English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, or score low on English proficiency exams.[115]

While states continue to provide services to meet the unique needs of migrant students and have made progress in tracking their academic performance, many challenges remain in ensuring that these students are being included in assessment and accountability systems and are making satisfactory academic progress.

Programs for Students Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk of Dropping Out (Title I, Part D)

Part D of Title I is intended to serve neglected or delinquent (N or D) children and youth who are not enrolled in regular school programs, most commonly because they are incarcerated in state or local correctional institutions. Part D authorizes two programs for neglected and delinquent students – programs for youth in state-operated institutions or community day programs (Subpart 1), and school

district programs involving collaboration with locally-operated correctional facilities (Subpart 2). State agency programs are funded through a separate appropriation ($46 million in FY 2001), while local N or D programs are allocated to school districts from funds reserved under Title I Part A (an estimated $59 million in FY 2001).

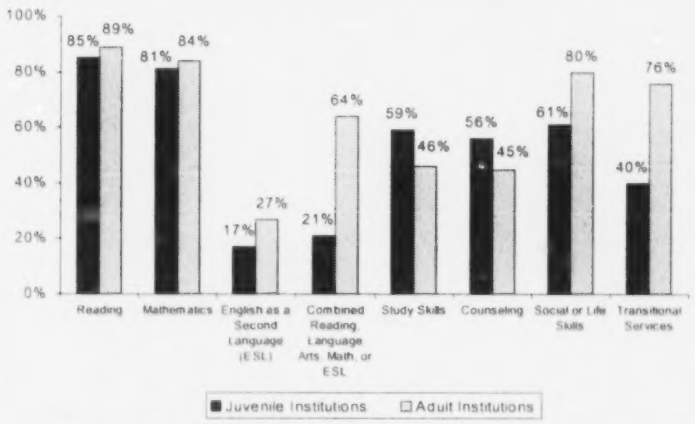
In 1997-98, state agency N or D programs served 205,000 neglected and delinquent students in state institutions, while local agency programs served an additional 85,000 students in local correctional facilities. Among participants residing in state institutions, 30 percent were in institutions for neglected children, 56 percent were in juvenile correctional facilities, and 14 percent were in adult correctional institutions. Participants in state institutions were overwhelming male (89 percent), about half (51 percent) were African American, and 53 percent were between the ages of 14 and 17.[116]

The 1994 reauthorization encouraged the implementation of institution-wide programs designed to improve the entire educational program and to serve the entire student population in institutions for neglected or delinquent youth. One-third (36 percent) of all state institutions eligible to implement an institution-wide project did so in 1999, more than double the percentage two years ago.[117] The universal eligibility inherent in an institution-wide approach is in itself one way to better meet the educational needs of incarcerated youth, in that it reflects the universal need among this population for additional assistance.

State agencies most commonly report using Title I N or D funds to purchase instructional materials (92 percent), computer software (84 percent), and computers (75 percent); to hire additional staff (79 percent); and to support staff development activities (61 percent). Agencies that operated institution-wide projects are especially likely to use funding for staff development (96 percent). State agencies were less likely to use Title I N or D funds for student assessment (48 percent), tutors or mentors (28 percent) or community activities (26 percent).[118]

Title I N or D funds support a wide range of academic and support services at state correctional institutions (Exhibit 27). The most widely available Title I-funded instructional services—reading and mathematics—were provided at more than 80 percent of all institutions, a finding that is consistent with the history of the N or D program. However, the provision of social or life skills instruction has increased to 61 percent in juvenile institutions, and to 80 percent in adult institutions, a much higher percentage than was found a decade ago when just 31 percent of all institutions offered this type of instruction with Title I funds. Adult institutions were also three times more likely than juvenile institutions to use Part D funds to provide combined classes in reading, mathematics, language arts, or English as a Second Language. Juvenile institutions more often used N or D funds to provide study skills instruction or counseling services.[119]

Exhibit 27
Title I Part D Services Offered in Juvenile and Adult Institutions for Neglected and Delinquent Children



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, *State Agency Activities Under the Title I Part D Program* (draft).

The most frequently reported challenge involved in meeting students' needs, as reported by state agencies, is poor educational follow-up with aftercare agencies. Although nearly half of state agencies reported on the availability of post-release case management services to assist youths in the re-entry process through referrals and counseling, far fewer reported on post-release tracking and documenting neglected or delinquent youths' reentering into school or obtaining employment. Other issues identified as serious problems included inadequate funding, limited space conducive to learning, a shortage of qualified teachers, and low student motivation. State agencies cite inadequate funding, staffing issues, such as shortages of qualified teachers, turnover, and poorly motivated teachers, and poor follow-up/transition programs, as the most frequent problems in implementing the Title I N or D program. The recommendation most often identified by state agencies for changing or improving the program is to increase funding. Indeed, state agencies report that the most frequent reason why some eligible institutions do not participate is that the amount of funds available are insufficient to justify the effort required to implement a program.[120]

Most state agencies' inability to maintain or report student outcome data underscores a widespread need among state agencies and institutions for additional technical assistance in program evaluation. Few states collect performance data on Part D participants other than test results—which may not provide an appropriate indicator of progress for these programs due to high turnover and the limited length of stay for many participants. Only a few state agencies maintain data on the number of school credits earned by Part D participants. Institutions are generally unable to collect comprehensive data on students' educational experiences and transition to further education or employment. When asked to identify areas of need for technical assistance among institution staff, the four areas of "great need" most frequently identified by state agencies concerned evaluation—setting up evaluation procedures, analyzing program evaluation results, designing a needs assessment, and testing issues. Part D programs need significant improvements in data collection and evaluation if they are to have sufficient information to guide program improvement efforts.[121]

VII. Progress and Challenges

Since Title I was reauthorized in 1994, states have made significant and thoughtful progress in its implementation. Although the current authorization period (1994 - 1999) has expired, the full impact of the law may not be seen for several years. While structural components of the law are scheduled to be in place in the 2000-01 school year, many features of states' accountability systems will not be fully implemented until later. For example, many of the requirements related to identifying schools in need of improvement and taking corrective actions take effect only after a school has failed to make progress for several years.

Almost all states have content standards, and 25 have performance standards. All have submitted evidence for peer review on their aligned assessment systems. Of these, 11 have been fully approved, six have been conditionally approved, 14 have been given a waiver of the time limit, and three have compliance agreements. Reviews of the remaining states are expected to be completed in spring 2001. Requirements to track progress are helping states, districts, and schools focus on implementing school improvement strategies.

Student achievement on national tests (NAEP) has shown little academic progress for children in high-poverty schools. Student scores have remained flat in reading but are slightly improved in mathematics. In addition, the increased gap between students in high- and low-poverty schools is troubling. These findings are perplexing in that states are reporting significantly more progress in student achievement as measured by state assessments. These inconsistent findings raise questions about the rigor of the content and performance standards and assessments that states have adopted. Perhaps an independent body such as the National Academy of Sciences should examine how we can best interpret these data from multiple sources.

A related problem is that timely and accurate data are not readily available. States are required to submit a program performance report describing basic program elements such as who the program is serving, the number of schoolwide programs vs. targeted assistance programs, and the number of schools and districts identified for improvement. These data are often received late and are often incomplete. In addition, the state-reported data frequently contain numerous errors that are corrected only after repeated calls to the states. For an accountability system to work, all parties must receive accurate and timely information. States need the information to help districts and schools; schools need the information so that they can improve instruction; parents need the information so that they will know how well the schools are meeting the needs of their children; and the U.S. Department of Education needs the information so that it can report to Congress how the funds that they have appropriated are being spent and the impact of those funds on achieving program goals.

As states continue to implement the Title I law, several significant challenges remain.

- Recent research has documented the impact of having high-quality instruction on student learning and conversely the lasting negative impact of even one year of poor instruction. Yet, a disproportionate number of teachers in high-poverty schools are inexperienced, lack proper certification, and are less likely to have opportunities for professional development. Moreover, a significant number of children who are the weakest academically are still receiving instruction from aides.

- While we know a great deal about what constitutes a high-quality education, we know less about how to turn around low-performing schools so that disadvantaged children can receive this kind of education. The capacity of states and districts to turn around these schools is hampered by both

resources as well as know-how. Many low-performing schools are not getting the help they need to improve, even after having been identified as in need of improvement for several years.

- Title I serves a large number of students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities, but many states have not yet implemented requirements to include these students in assessment and accountability systems.

- Despite research on the critical importance of early childhood education, most American children—and a disproportionate number of poor children—lack access to quality preschool programs. While the U.S. Department of Education is beginning to coordinate with Head Start so that federal support for early childhood education through Title I, Even Start, IDEA, and Head Start can be better integrated, this link needs to be strengthened. In particular, increased emphasis is needed on early literacy and on coordinating Head Start and Title I performance indicators on child learning and development.

- The recognition of the importance of providing opportunities for extended-time instruction has not yet led to sufficient after-school programs, particularly for poorer children. Consequently these children are not receiving the extra time that may be needed to catch up to their more advantaged peers.

- Research on the importance of parental involvement in children's education has not yet led to sufficient involvement, particularly in poor families. While parent-school compacts highlight the joint effort required by students, schools, and families, they tend to operate outside of the regular school plan. Parent involvement must become an integral part of a school's efforts to improve student learning.

- Reports from states show that in many cases states are still operating under a dual system—an accountability system under the Title I provisions and a state-sponsored accountability system. The intent of the law was that there would be one strong and rigorous system and that Title I would be included in that system. It causes confusion within a state when two systems operate that have different standards.

Despite these challenges, we have reason to remain positive. We know a lot about what constitutes good reading and math instruction and have developed more focused programs of professional development to equip teachers with the skills they need to provide high-quality instruction aligned to their content standards. We also have observed many schools that—despite high odds for failure—are becoming successful and can serve as models for other schools. Moreover, students' scores tend to be higher in classrooms where teachers are aware of standards. The U.S. Department of Education must help districts and schools improve instruction by disseminating more accessible information on research-based practice and best practice sites, and by providing appropriate technical assistance to help districts and schools utilize the information in order to improve their students' achievement. Furthermore, we must do a better job of collecting, analyzing, and using state performance data and NAEP data to closely monitor the nation's progress in serving disadvantaged children.

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